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# HISTORY OF STROOD.



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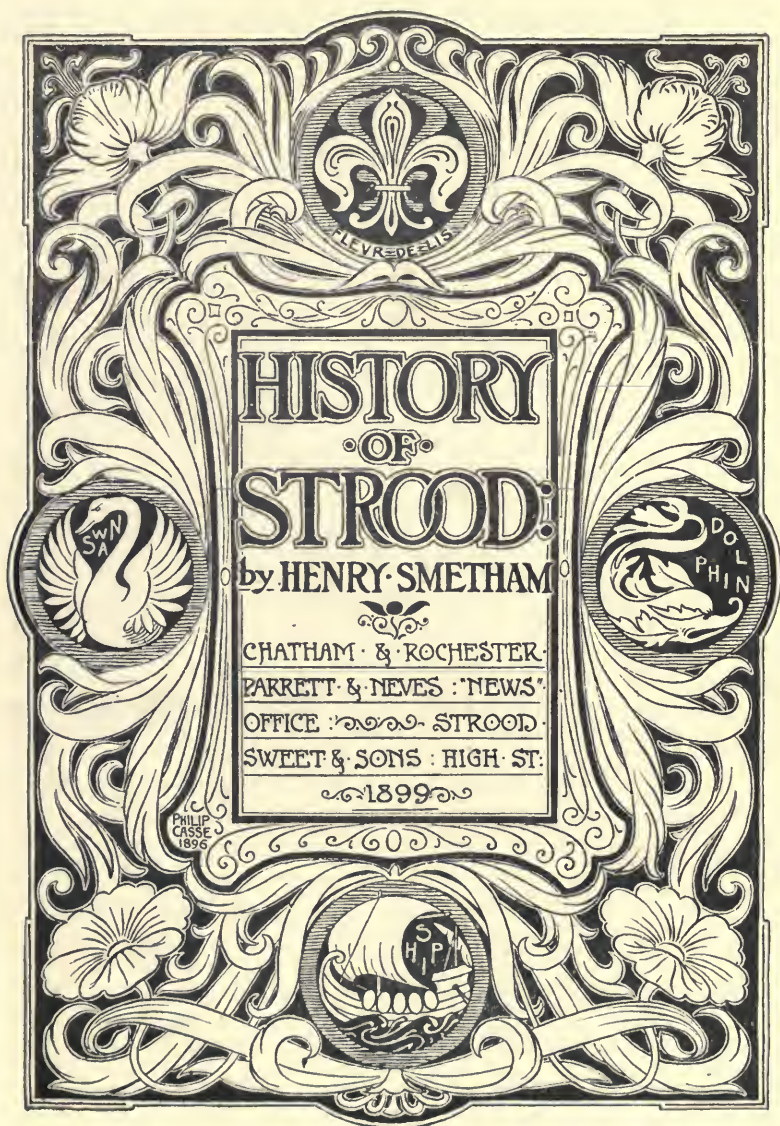






ROCHESTER AND STROOD, 1838.

[By J. W. M. Turner, R.A.]



*Designed and Drawn by Philip Casse.*

PARRETT & NEVES,  
30, HIGH STREET, CHATHAM.



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TO

MR. GEORGE STEVENS

THIS BOOK IS

AFFECTIONATELY AND GRATEFULLY DEDICATED.

727500

"If stationary men would pay some attention to the districts in which they reside, and would publish their thoughts respecting the objects that surround them, from such materials might be drawn the most complete county histories, which are still wanting in several parts of the kingdom."

White: *Natural History of Selbourne.*

## PREFACE.

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IN April, 1895, at the request of the Editor of the *Chatham News* [Mr. George Neves] I wrote an article on the Crypt of Strood Church and its lost monuments. The question of the origin of the Strood Church Creditors' Rate, and all it embodied, had, by the lapse of time, almost passed from living memory, and much misconception prevailed.

I took upon myself the task of going through the entire mass of the Trustee Records, and extracts of interest appeared in the columns of the *Chatham News* at intervals. It was urged upon me that I should embody them in a fuller and more connected form in the nature of a history of our little town. The present volume is the outcome of that request; and those who urged the appeal must accept share of the responsibility for its production.

To the subscribers, who alone made the question of its publication possible, my warmest thanks are due. Of the friendly help received I cannot speak too highly, for without such assistance, the task, onerous enough in itself, would have been well-nigh hopeless.

To my friend Mr. Alfred Rhodes (author of *Ancient M.P.'s of Rochester*) my especial thanks are due for much painstaking and accurate work. The discovery of a sketch of the old Church was due to his help. I am also much indebted to Messrs. A. A. Arnold, F.S.A.; George Payne, F.S.A.; W. T. Vincent (President of Woolwich Archæological Society); G. Owen Howell (Editor of *Kentish Note Book*); Stephen T. Aveling; William Henry Reynolds; F. G. Chant; George Robinson; William Ball; Thomas Lurcock; J. W. Tutt, F.E.S.; George Newman; George Dibley, F.G.S.; and to the Officials of the British Museum Library.

There are others to whom I have endeavoured to render justice on my literary journey, and I can only hope that, among the many, none have been overlooked. Especial mention should be made of the fact that, in all the illustrations the volume contains, the original work has been done cheerfully and gratuitously. This simple statement will, the writer trusts, be accepted by those collaborators as an expression of his real gratitude for such valued help.

H.S.

Strood,

September, 1899.





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## ERRATA.

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P. 75. Thomas William (? Edward) Hulkes died January 24, 1824. Accounts are conflicting respecting the manner of this gentleman's death, several old inhabitants stating that he died in his house at St. Margaret's. The body of a man unknown was found in the mill pond, and the writer's informant may have confused the two events.

P. 238; footnote, Sir John Leake. For 1808-15 read 1708-15. The charge of embezzlement noted may have been entirely malicious, and have had little or no foundation in fact.



P.p. 353-358. The High Tide occurred on November 29th, 1897  
—not 1898.

# History of Strood.

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## CHAPTER I.

### GENESIS.

"Where'er thy dwelling place on earth may be,  
Let it be chiefest of the world to thee;  
Thy home though poor let no man dare asperse;  
It is the centre of thy universe."

*Wm. Thomas Vincent.*

STROOD is situated on the north-western bank of the River Medway, the ancient portion of the town being almost entirely restricted to the low-lying land at the foot of the hills.

There is little reason to doubt that the settlement of Strood was contemporaneous with that of Rochester.

Its name, which is derived from the Latin *strata*—a term applied by the Romans to their paved ways—is its best indication of antiquity. These Roman roads were, by the Saxons, subsequently called streets; and the term, which is of very frequent occurrence, indicates with some degree of certainty the actual course of these ancient ways.

Our Saxon forefathers spelt the name as *Strode* or *Strodes*, and it so continued through the Norman period. In the year 1193, Strood, which up to that date had been a mere southern hamlet within the parish of Frindsbury, was divided from the latter, and created a separate parish, still retaining its ancient name. The name appears in the same form near Reculver (Kent), in Surrey, Hampshire, near Southampton, and in Dorsetshire. Few Strood people need reminding that there is also a Stroud in Gloucestershire, the frequency with which their letters are wrongly forwarded to the western county having sufficiently impressed this fact upon their minds. Subject to slight variations, such as *Strude*, *Strowde*, and



*Stroud*, it continued to the last century, when—probably to avoid postal and other complications—it was altered to our present-day form of spelling.

The Romans built a bridge of wood across the Medway, between Strood and Rochester; some of the ancient piles of which the late Mr. J. Howell Ball discovered when he cleared the river after the removal of the mediæval stone bridge.\*

Various discoveries have, at different times, added evidence in support of the Roman origin of the name, by its undoubted testimony of the Roman occupation of Strood.

Near to Temple Farm, the excavations for brick-earth brought to light in 1838-9 the existence of a Roman cemetery, from which many relics of the conquering rulers were obtained. These are fully illustrated and recorded in Roach Smith's *Collectanea Antiqua*, Vol. I. The articles themselves were chiefly in the possession of the late Mr. Humphrey Wickham, and were, after his decease (1893), sold at Sotheby's. Among the items discovered in this cemetery were from 600 to 700 Roman coins—a remarkable hoard. These coins bore the image or superscription of 52 Roman rulers, male and female. They ranged from the days of Antonia, in the first century, to that of Gratian in the last quarter of the fourth century; very few, however, being earlier than the reign of Vespasian, A.D. 69 to 79. The majority bore the mint marks of the Antonines and Faustinae, whilst there were many of the small brass of Carausius, Allectus, and the Constantines. Such diversity of date points to a Roman occupation of Strood extending over 300 years. The principal deposits were found in Church field. From the character of the relics found, Mr. Roach Smith was of opinion that these cemeteries were chiefly used by people of the poorer classes.

Presumably, the Roman road through Strood was wider and more direct than is the High-street as we know it to-day. In excavating a cellar some thirty years ago, under the house (No. 97) directly opposite the Angel Inn, portions of the old Roman pavement were discovered (it still remains *in situ*)

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\* A collection of these wood piles, either from the Roman or Saxon bridge, perhaps from both, now lies rotting away in the marsh near the Rochester Gas Works.

about five feet below the present level. The same fact was also revealed in rebuilding the premises Nos. 107 and 109 on the same side (south) of the street, five or six doors further up.

In the winter of 1896, the Corporation of Rochester began a series of operations for mitigating the floods caused by abnormal storms in Strood.

For this purpose, iron pipes of 3ft. diameter were laid from the High-street, under the passage of the Workmen's Institute, extending to the creek at the rear. The excavators uncovered a gravelled portion of soil, which, with some boulder stone, had been deposited upon the river clay, and which extended in a slanting direction southwards towards the creek. At the rear of these premises the spoon (now in the Rochester Museum) which is here illustrated was found. It is of base metal, of 14th or 15th century workmanship, hexagonal shaped style, with a "dyamond poynted" knop.



In North-street, running parallel to the Angel buildings, under a continuation of the same soil at a depth of about six feet, a piece of oak timber was revealed—the greater portion of which was left *in situ*—extending south to north nearly fifty feet. Its appearance gave indication of its having formed half the trunk of a tree, and it had probably been placed there for similar purposes as were the cross beams alluded to below. Another branch of the same operations starts from the Strood Esplanade (its outfall being under the bridge) and continues, passing Messrs. Aveling's works, up the south side of the High street to Station-road. Soon after leaving the riverside, traces

of a paved way, slanting to the river, of probable Roman construction, were met with. Unmistakably was this the case when the direct line of the High-street was reached, for here the paved way of the Romans, broken and imperfect in various portions, stretched away to the west in an undoubted line. Finally, on Thursday morning, 20th May, 1897, the workmen, at a depth of about three feet, came upon a very fine portion about two yards beyond the south-west corner of the S.E.R. bridge which crosses the High-street at this spot.

When the Romans—who had come to stay—reached Rochester, they found the river Medway a stream of great volume, wide in its extent, and (in the bed of the river) very rapid in its tidal flow. Two courses were open to them in crossing the river, i.e., by the native fords higher up the stream, or by boats, neither of which methods was likely to permanently commend itself to this indomitable race. When the bridge, which there is good reason to believe they built, was erected, the landing place on the western side—and extending nearly to Strood church—presented engineering difficulties of no mean order. The land was marshy soil, soft, boggy, and unsafe; and, in all probability, almost entirely submerged at every high tide, whilst creeks and other inlets ran in various directions. The discovery made by the excavators in these operations revealed to us the methods by which the Romans overcame these obstacles. They first drove piles into the river clay—which the excavations continually revealed at a uniform depth of about seven feet all over the High-street level—and on these piles oak cross beams were laid.\* Upon these were deposited, first a layer of large flints and then a substantial thickness of gravel,† and then a deep bed of rammed chalk was added. On the chalk, they placed a further layer of shingle, very black and hard, from the sea shore, and above this was finally laid the paved way.

With commendable public spirit, the Corporation, through the City Surveyor (Mr. William Banks), aided by a most capable and intelligent foreman of works (Mr. Carter), first framed, and then raised from the bed it had occupied for so

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\* Some good examples of this piling and cross beams remain *in situ*, running from the front of the Cobham Inn towards the L.C. & D.R. Station.

† This might have been obtained from the higher levels near the church.

many centuries the fine portion of this paved road now in the local museum. It is to be presumed that where this Roman paved way fails to reveal itself in the High-street previous excavations have removed it.

The grooves caused by the ancient chariot wheels are plainly observable in this portion of pavement.

A number of Roman coins were also discovered: among the legible ones being:—

- 1.—First Brass A.D. 138.  
Obverse: ANTONINUS. AVG. PIVS. P.P. TR. COS. XXI.  
Reverse: DES. IIII. S.C.  
Figure by an altar with a serpent, in right hand a plate, in left, a rudder resting on a globe.
- 2.—Obverse: MAXIMIANVS. NOB. CAES  
Reverse: GENIO. POPVLI. ROMANI. A.D. 285. Second brass.  
Young man holding Cornucopia in left hand, and patera in right.
- 3.—Obverse: IMP. GORDIANVS. PIVS. FEL. AVG.  
Reverse: IOVI. STATORI.  
Gordianus III. A.D. 238.
- 4.—ANTONINUS PIUS. 2nd brass almost obliterated. A.D. 138.
- 5.—IMP. NERVA. CAES. AVG. A.D. 96.

Each of the above coins was found in the stratum lying on the top of piling, where also a lead weight, and a piece of ore weighing about 60lbs., were found.

The name of the Manor of Wickham is also evidence that Strood was much frequented during the Roman occupation, as the word is a sure sign throughout England of the existence of a Roman cross road, village or *vicus*. Excavations connected with the Cement Works at Wickham, and also at the Strood new Cemetery north of it, have, as late as 1896, brought to light Roman urn burials. At the western corner of this cemetery traces of Saxon deposits have also been exhumed, which may at any date lead to interesting and valuable results.

The main Roman road, as the matters previously mentioned prove, ran then as now, through Strood to London, but they also used an ancient cross road running through Cuxton, proofs of the latter having been established by sepulchral interments discovered along the line of route.

The ancient British trackway commonly called the "Pilgrim Road" runs at the base of the chalk hills on either side of the Medway, entering Kent (on the western side from Surrey) near Titsey, and continues past Kemsing, Wrotham, Snodland, Upper Halling, and Cuxton, until it enters the Roman Road at



the Gun Inn, Strood.\* It continues via Gun-lane, through Frindsbury into Hoo St. Werburgh; many Roman remains have been disinterred in the latter named village.

When the canal adjoining the South Eastern Railway at Strood was cut, the foundations of a Roman house were met with, but no further search being made, a simple statement of the fact is all that can be said. The timber yards on either side of the canal cover the remaining portion of this building.

In 1852, excavations of brick earth adjacent to the Roman cemetery (Temple Farm), already mentioned, revealed two Saxon graves. The first contained a skeleton, the iron umbo of a shield, a knife, an earthenware urn, and a most remarkable javelin,  $17\frac{1}{2}$  inches long, with a four-sided head, having points recurved like fish hooks—a very horrible weapon.† The second was even more interesting. Accompanying this skeleton were a sword, a spear-head, a knife, the umbo of a shield, all of iron; also a bronze buckle, and a remarkable circular bronze box stamped in relief with three figures six times repeated. Mr. Roach Smith, vol. II., p. 159, *Collectanea Antiqua*, thus describes the decoration:—"It consists of three personages, the middle seated and nimbed, the others standing, one on each side, with their arms crossed upon the breast; above the head of one is a cross, and over the other a bird carrying a wreath. Below is a border of foliage and birds, partially concealed by the band. The Christian character of the design will be at once recognised, but the subject intended to be represented is not so apparent. It seems to be a copy of one of the numerous representations in Scripture history common in the fourth and fifth centuries, of which a many good examples are extant at Rome in sculptures procured from the Catacombs; such as Christ seated teaching in the Temple, or Christ with the Apostles Peter and Paul. The fabrication of the copper may be assigned to the fifth or sixth century, and it was, doubtless, imported into Britain from Gaul or Italy." The lid and bottom of the box were lost. The whole of the articles enumerated were for years in the possession of the late Mr. Humphrey Wickham, until after his decease, when the auctioneer's hammer scattered them.

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\* *Collectanea Cantiana*, p. 131, G. Payne, F.S.A.

† *Olden Strood*.

The more important articles of this Strood collection went to the British Museum. We can only regret that the entire collection was not purchased for the Museum at Rochester, where it would, at all times, have served in illustration of local history, and would have formed also a fitting memorial of a worthy citizen and a zealous antiquary. Two Roman graves were discovered during the building of the North Aylesford (Strood) Workhouse, one skeleton being accompanied by a cup of Samian ware and a vase of red clay. On the north side of Strood Hill an Anglo-Saxon grave was unearthed containing a spearhead, a knife, and a bronze ring set with an amethyst: these are all deposited in the Rochester Museum. The interments on the Workhouse site were found within a few yards of the ancient road (Gun-lane) from Surrey to Strood, Frindsbury, and Hoo.

There is a manor in Frindsbury called Æslingham which, in the opinion of Mr. George Payne, F.S.A., denotes that a branch of the Æslingas made their *hame* or home there in Anglo-Saxon times. The Æslingas clan originally settled at Eastling near Faversham, some of whom took up their quarters on the north-western bank of the Medway—as did the Chatti, from whom Chatham derived its name, on the eastern side. It should be mentioned that in the Strood new cemetery a bone comb, and other fragments of pre-Roman date, were also found.

Imagination alone may help us to realise the varying phases of life and civilization these scenes, so familiar to our eyes, have witnessed. Across the river in Roman times our forefathers beheld the massive walls of the military station Durobrivæ (Rochester) stretching away almost from Castle Hill to Rochester Common. In the centre was the gate, from which spot the Roman bridge crossed the Medway. Doubtless, too, the dwellers in Strood beheld the splendour of many Roman military displays, and heard the martial music of Rome as it floated across the dividing river. "Strood," says Canon Scott Robertson, "must have seen the march of conquering cohorts, the triumphs of successful Roman generals, the progress of Roman emperors, and the semi-regal state of many governors." Owing to its situation few national events have occurred in ancient days by which Strood remained untouched.



Finally, after an occupation of about 400 years, the Romans withdrew from Britain, and our little Island, as is well known, was split up into seven small kingdoms. Internal divisions, wars, and strifes succeeded the settled order, peace, and prosperity of the past Roman rule, and, as internal divisions ever have and will do, invited foreign aggression.

About the year 677 *Lotharius* usurped the throne of Egbert and became King of Kent. In this war of usurpation he committed great excesses, from which Rochester suffered severely, and Strood doubtless bore her share. A few years later *Ceadwalla* King of Wessex invaded Kent and made Rochester again endure the miseries of war and rapine; and again when the county had scarce recovered, Ethelred, King of Mercia—if he is not confused with the former—invaded Kent, when, according to Philipot, Rochester “drank deep of the bitter cup,” churches and monasteries being “destroyed in a horrible manner.”

At the invasions of the Danes, awful atrocities were committed upon the inhabitants. In 839-40 Rochester thus suffered, and in what evils came to the city, Strood was sure to obtain a share. It is satisfactory to know that in 884 the illustrious King Alfred drove these ferocious marauders from Rochester with great loss, the Danes being obliged to fly to their ships, leaving their horses and belongings on shore, where, doubtless, our Saxon forefathers made good use of them. As we are nearing the millenary of King Alfred no apology is needed for the accompanying plate.

Though during the Saxon period Kent was probably more favoured and prosperous than other places, little progress was made until after the Norman conquest had again brought the land into subjection under one powerful head. Whatever might have been the status of Strood under the Roman occupation, and during the time of tumult that followed, it came to be a mere fishing hamlet with agricultural adjuncts, more or less obscure, ever dwarfed and overshadowed by its “predominant partner” Rochester. It should, however, be a source of legitimate pride to its inhabitants to know that few towns could adduce more historic attributes to give it importance than Strood possesses.



ALFRED THE GREAT.

An ancient British way flanks its western boundary, a Roman road—its eloquent testimony yet lying under our feet—runs through it, a Roman walled station and a noble river protected it on the east, and a Teutonic tribe dwelt to the north of it, whilst its scenery is of unrivalled beauty.

“Far from thy banks fair Medway now I roam,  
Far from the stream that flows beside my home;  
Now by soft Avon’s tide I wander slow  
And watch its dark and melancholy flow,  
Flow on, sweet Avon, fair as thy windings be,  
The Medway’s course is fairer far to me.

Where are the stately ruins to be seen  
That grace and dignify her shores of green?  
Where are the grey time-honoured piles of old,  
’Neath which for centuries her tides have rolled?  
Flow on, sweet Avon! proudly flow along:  
But prouder flows the river of my song.”

So sings George Shirley, our local poet.

The ancient Briton, the Roman, the Saxon, and the invading Dane and Norman, have alike trod the familiar paths we tread to-day. They saw the morning sun as it rose up from beyond the North Sea, and beheld its setting as it dropped behind the swell of our western hills. Fashioned in rare loveliness stand these same hills, crowned with waving woods, and—save where man has marred the divine handiwork—clothed as with a garment in verdure varied as are the flowers of the field; curving away in many a beauteous line as they sweep down to the fertile vales below. Such were the scenes our forefathers beheld in the days of old; and after this manner, so look thou, reader, either to the right hand or to the left, for, behold, it is very good.

## CHAPTER II.

### STIRRING TIMES.

“Antiquity is the great luminary of Time, which dispels those clouds that, like a gloomy screen, interposing between the object and the understanding, cast it into error and misapprehension.”—Thos. Philipott, *Villare Cantianum*. Preface, 1756.

STROOD has witnessed many times of trouble ; whatever commotion shook the kingdom, seldom left our little town unvisited.

Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, was a large land-owner in Kent, and among his other possessions were the Manors of Boncakes (Newark) and Godington, in Strood.

Simon de Montfort\* has been described as the “organizer if not the founder of the British House of Commons.” He headed the Barons in their war against Henry III., and besieged Rochester during that struggle. (See also chapter on the Bridge.) Beside his Manors in Strood, he owned estates in Chelsfield, Farnborough, Horton Kirby, Hastingleigh, and at Cranbrook and Marden. His wife, who was tenant for life of the Castle and Manor of Town Sutton (Valence), was the Princess Eleanor, sister to the King. Possessed of such social and landed influence, many Kentish magnates—Badlesmere, Criol, Crevequer, Sandwich, &c., &c.—joined with him in resisting the aggressive encroachments of the King. De Montfort arrived in Strood, accompanied by a large force, in Lent 1264. The first obstacle to be overcome was the fortified gate-house at the Strood end of the Bridge, which was defended by Earl Warren and Sir Roger Leybourne, in the interests of the King.

Unhappy Strood was occupied by the army of the Barons and doubtless endured many hardships. Several fruitless attempts were made to carry the bridge, none being successful until De Montfort hit upon an entirely novel device. Several small ships were filled with inflammable matter ; their decks

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There is a Street in Strood bearing the name of “Montfort” Road.



were heaped high with dry wood covered with pitch, sulphur, and pork fat. When wind and tide served, these vessels were set on fire and floated against the bridge. Blazing furiously they at length came to rest beside and beneath the old wooden structure, which quickly took fire. Panic seized the defenders of the Tower, who left the fortress undefended, and fled to Rochester. Montfort and his soldiers then crossed the bridge in the confusion. Meanwhile, marching by a circuitous route, Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, at the same time reached Rochester on the southern side, and on Good Friday, 1264, the allied forces of the Barons became masters of the city, though not of the castle. What Strood suffered by the army of the Barons has not been chronicled, but Rochester was visited with terrible destruction. Montfort's forces sacked the town, the Monastery, and the Cathedral, from whence they carried off a valuable booty. The defenders of the Castle, from military necessity, burned all the suburbs adjacent to the Castle walls; they likewise destroyed the King's Hall within the Castle precincts, the Constable thereof having previously unroofed the King's Chamber and taken off the tiles. The \*Hundred Roll states these tiles to have been 3,000 in number and worth 20/-. On Saturday (Easter Eve) the Barons took the outer bailey, or court, of the Castle. The garrison then shut themselves within the strong Norman Keep, which yet endures—a pride and glory to us all. With all the power at his command De Montfort assailed them fiercely for seven days, during which attempts many were slain; but Earl Warren and Sir Roger Leybourne still retained the stronghold. Fearing for the safety of London, then threatened by the King's army, De Montfort suddenly left Rochester on the Saturday after Easter, leaving but a small body behind to prosecute the siege. This force was both insufficient and ineffective for the purpose. Prince Edward, the King's son, marched from Nottingham to the relief of Rochester, accomplishing the long journey in five days, though many fine horses were lost, dying from over exertion.

De Montfort's few soldiers were all taken and treated with great barbarity, being cruelly maimed of their hands and feet. Three days afterwards Earl Warren departed from Rochester,

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\* *Furley's Weald of Kent*, II., 145.

having arrived there but 13 days previous. With Rochester and the King's troops victorious, an aftermath of misery befell unhappy Strood. Strood Quay and the houses built upon it (see Chapter on the Bridge) by Bishop de Glanville, were all destroyed by Earl Warren and Sir Roger Leybourne, and the few goods and chattels yet remaining to Strood after De Montfort's army had been quartered on them, were seized by the King's officers.

The Hundred Roll (3 Ed. I.) in the return for the Hundred of Shamele, states that the Sergeant of Rochester Castle (Peter Gardeen) early in May, 1264, took from William Parlebien three oxen worth 40/-; four cows worth two marcs; three heifers worth 15/-; 115 sheep worth 100/-; and 27 acres of grain worth 15 marcs. From another man the Sergeant took half a piece of cheese worth half a marc, *i.e.*, equal in value to one cow.

On the 14th May, 1264, De Montfort won the battle of Lewes (about a fortnight after leaving Rochester), when the King was taken prisoner and brought to Rochester by the victors. From Rochester a proclamation was issued on the 25th May, transferring all the Royal Castles to the Barons.

On the 4th August, 1265, De Montfort was slain at the battle of Evesham, and the King again became master of the situation. Once more was unlucky Strood beaten with many stripes. A heavy fine was levied upon the parish because De Montfort had *dwelt in Strood* during his assault upon Rochester! This fine, amounting to £80, would be equivalent to £1,200 or £1,500 of our present money. Altogether a serious burden to our struggling forefathers, but few in number, who were thus made to turn both cheeks to their smiters.

De Montfort's lands—after the battle of Evesham and the restoration of the Royal power—were forfeited to the Crown. All these lands were given to the King's second son, Edmond Plantagenet, who, in 1267, was created Earl of Leicester, and Earl of Lancaster. In consequence the Duchy of Lancaster, even up to our own days, had claims of lordship over the Manors of Godington and Boncakes. Blanche, a female descendant, brought the lordship of Godington Manor to Prince John of Gaunt—"time honoured Lancaster"—to whom she was married in 1359. She was mother of King Henry IV. Ever



since his reign this Manor and all possessions of the Duchy of Lancaster have been vested in the Crown.

Records of the reign of Edward III. give some idea of the population and prosperity of Strood 500 years ago. There exists in the State Paper Office a list of persons whose movable effects were taxed in 1327 as being worth more than 10/0—about £6 to £7 of our present money. The City of Rochester contained only 69 such lay persons, the total value of their goods and chattels was £211 3s. 4d.—about £3,000 present value. Persons equally affluent in Strood numbered exactly one-third—*i.e.*, 23. The total amount of all their personalty was £121 11s. 8d.—about £1,500 of our present money. Of these 23 taxpayers in Strood (1327) the largest was Sir Henry de Cobham, assessed at £30. Next to him in wealth was John Askelyn, £13 5s. od.; Stephen le Creye (see monuments old Church), £10 6s. 8d.; Stephen de Cobham, £10; the Prior of Rochester, £8; the Master of the Newark, Strood, £6 1s. 8d.; Richard Gromyng, £5; Elias Chaunceler, £4; John Mons, jun., £3 os. 5d.; John Mons, sen.,\* £2 5s. 10d.; Agnes Gildewyn, £2; and a dozen others of smaller amounts. Such assessments give no idea of the population, which was fully ten times greater. It is, however, a very singular fact that 300 years later, in 1628, during the reign of Charles I., the number of persons assessed for certain King's taxes was only *one more* than in 1327. These 24 persons were (1628) assessed to pay £36 in five instalments. The population of Strood 500 years ago can be given with tolerable exactness. In 1377, the last year of Edward III., a poll tax was charged for every lay person in the land (the priesthood had sufficient power to keep out of it, apparently) above the age of 14 years. Beggars, being, we suppose, a hopeless class, were also exempt from this impost. In the Record Office the receipt for this poll tax in Strood yet exists. At 4d. per head it amounted to 67/-. The number of lay persons, male and female, above 14 was therefore 201. The number of children under 14 is generally half of the number above 14; adding 101 children to the senior list we get 302; which, with 18 more added for ecclesiastics and beggars, the population stood (in 1377) at 320 souls. Rochester had a population just under 900; Chatham contained about the

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\* See Altar Lights.

same number as Strood; whilst the inhabitants of Maidstone then numbered 1,266. Supposing each house contained five people, Strood possessed 74 houses and Rochester 180. Another person of social importance in Strood was Elias Rayner, who, in 1380 (see M.P.'s of Rochester) was appointed on a Royal Commission. He was one of the sufferers in Wat Tyler's rising. (Ibid, 1378.)

In the time of Charles II. the town of Strood was officially returned as comprising three boroughs, viz.—Temple Borough, Little Borough, and Duchy Borough. At that time, 1663, the Duchy Borough contained 13 houses, which were taxed as containing 46 hearths, or fire places. The records of the hearth tax (1663) gives fresh *data* for computation. This tax list gives Temple Borough as containing 129 houses, with 398 hearths or chimneys; Little Borough 50 houses, with 154 hearths; Duchy Borough 13 houses, containing 46 hearths. This, on the former basis of calculation per house, gives a population of 969 souls—just treble its number in 1377. The largest houses were in Temple Borough. Robert Preston occupied a house with 11 hearths, Constance Walsall (see tradesmen's tokens) 6 hearths. This tax was,—deservedly so—very unpopular. There is an epitaph in Folkestone churchyard where this feeling finds quaint expression.

“In memory of Rebecca Rogers, who died August 22, 1688, aged 44 years.

“A house she hath, it's made of such good fashion,  
The tenant ne'er shall pay for reparation;  
Nor will her landlord ever raise her rent,  
Or turn her out of doors for non-payment.  
From chimney money, too, this cell is free,  
To such a house who would not tenant be.”

When the Palace of Westminster was being built (1258-9), Alured de Strode supplied for 6/- a shipload of grey stone to make gutters and a quay.\* Among the earlier Strood Records—Richard I., John, and Henry III.—we read of Thomas Faber (*i.e.*, the Smith), Walter the Smith; Wulfwin the Smith; and his two sons, who were cutlers; Amfrid the dyer (*tinctuarius*); Adam the tanner or skinner (*pelliparius*); Godwin the weaver (*textor*); and Geldewine the cobbler (*sutor*).

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\* Devon's Issues of the Exchequer, p. 54.

The occupations of the people of Strood were agricultural and maritime. When Jack Cade's rising occurred, in 1450, several Strood men joined the rebels. Of eight Strood men who survived and were pardoned, half were "ship" men (John Hert, Simon Hert, John Frere, and Robert Frere); of the others, John Newenham was a yeoman, Robert Worme was a barber, John Cheeseman a corveser, and Thomas Hencote\* a mason.

In a minor degree, then as now, the adjacent chalk hills of Frindsbury furnished much occupation to Strood men, thousands of tons of chalk having doubtless been excavated in olden times. To-day the name of 'Hill' seems hardly applicable, seeing that its southern spur has practically disappeared to furnish cement for the world's consumption; and to give Rochester a sharper taste of the north-east wind. In the Middle Ages the pillars and arches of churches, interiors of walls, and sometimes whole houses were often built of chalk. The crypt of Temple Manor House is a beautiful legacy to us of this time and work. Then, as now, chalk was used to lighten heavy soils in addition to its other beneficial action for agricultural advantages. It was also the raw produce for lime. Upon Strood Hill several such kilns were worked, some of them being in use within living memory.

In 1279-80, Robert *Lymbernere*, of Strode, appears as witness to a deed which shows him to have been a landholder in Strood. By that deed Robert Machun (Mason ?) of Frendesberri, gave to his son Ralph 8 acres of land in Strood. Four acres of this land were bounded on the west by lands belonging to Robert Lymbernere; and on the east by William Parlebien's land. The other four acres lay between the lands of Adam, the baker of Hoo, and James Geldwyne. It will be remembered that Wm. Parlebien was the unfortunate creature whose sheep and oxen were spoiled by the Rochester Royalists after the defeat of De Montfort's forces.

In 1327, William de Boleya was a taxpayer within the City. Canon Scott Robertson credits the name of Boley Hill with being a survival of this gentleman's life in Rochester.

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\* See bequests for Altar lights.

In the Fabric Roll of Rochester Castle the following entries occur during 1367-8.

	s.	d.
To Gilbert Geldewyne, for Two Casks bought of him for carrying the Lime of Frenesbery to the said Castle, at 22d. a-piece . . . . .	3	8
To John Walsh, for freight for carrying 33½ tons of Block Chalk from Frenesbery to the said Castle, at 2½d. per ton . . . . .	5	7
To the said John for freight for carrying 360 quarters of Lime from Frenesbery to the said Castle, at ¼d. per quarter . . . . .	15	0
To John Marchaunt, for an ox-hide, curried, for covering a pair of bellows therewith . . . . .	8	6

John Marchaunt was M.P. for Rochester 1383, 1388, 1417, and 1421. In 1401 he had a share in the old Rochester inn, the White Hart. (See "M.P.'s for Rochester," where we learn he is described in the R.O., as of Strood.)

Among the agricultural products of Strood was saffron. As late as 1673, a saffron garden in Strood was entered in the Strood Parish book as worth a rent of £10 per annum. In 1657, silk weaving was carried on here; and there was also a ropewalk here in 1723. The outcropping of the chalk, beyond the clay on which the town of Strood stands, was noted as forming a well-defined line of demarcation. In early Charters the monks of Rochester describe certain lands, from which they expect Henry de Cobham to pay them a quarterly rent charge, as being "upon the chalk towards the north in Strodes"—which was the whole definition. They likewise describe a certain house in which they were interested as being that of Adam the tanner, "a new house built upon the chalk."

In 1554, Sir Thomas Wyatt, in his rebellion to prevent the marriage of Queen Mary to Philip of Spain, occupied Rochester Castle, and fortified the Strood end of Rochester Bridge to withstand the Queen's troops. On Monday afternoon, 29th January, 1554, the Royalist forces, under the Duke of Norfolk, were in Strood, and occupied "the sloping ground facing Rochester, and within cannon shot of the Bridge."

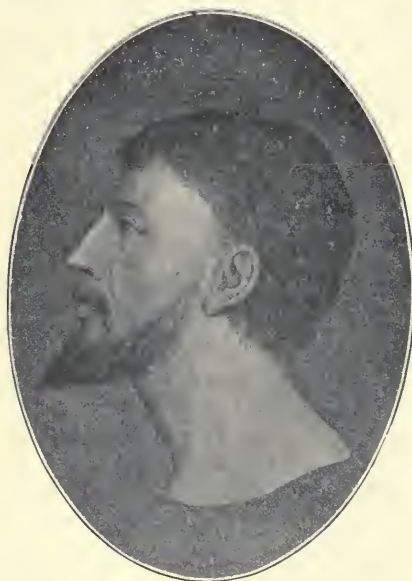
It was a remarkable sight Strood witnessed that day.

"The Duke was in front with Ormond, Jerningham, and 8 field pieces; a group of insurgents were in sight across the water; a gun was placed in position to bear upon them, and the gunner was blowing his match, when Sir Ed. Gray galloped up shouting that 'the Whitecoats are changing sides.' The Duke



had fallen into the trap Sir Thos. Harper had laid. Turning round he saw Capt. Brett with all his men and Harper (who had artfully managed the train bands) at his side advancing; when Brett, halting and raising his sword, exclaimed 'Masters, we are going to fight in an unlucky quarrel against our friends and countrymen, who seek only to preserve us from the dominion of foreigners; wherefore, I think no English heart should oppose them, and I am resolved for my own part to shed my blood in the cause of this worthy Captain, Master Wyatt.'"

His comrades shouted "A Wyatt! A Wyatt! We are all Englishmen."



SIR THOMAS WYATT THE YOUNGER,  
*Executed on Tower Hill, 11th April, 1554.*

Norfolk's first impulse was to turn the gun upon them; the second and more prudent was to spring to his horse and gallop, with the Earl of Arundel and half-a-dozen others, for their lives to Gravesend.

Wyatt coming up at this moment with a party of horse, intercepted the rest, crying out "As many as tarry with with us shall be welcome; as many as will depart let them go."

Nearly the whole force deserted; the 8 brass guns, the money, and Norfolk's baggage, fell into the hands of the insurgents, and 500 of the London train bands joined Wyatt's forces.

The next day Wyatt attacked Cooling Castle, which his uncle, Lord Cobham, defended. The Castle being but ill-provided for a siege, was soon taken and pillaged. (pp. 16-18, *Wyatt's Rebellion*. Robert Furley, F.S.A., Maidstone, 1878.)

Though this Spanish marriage was hateful to the English people, it took place, and in Lent, 1556, Strood beheld this gloomy Spanish Bigot, as he passed along the High Street, and likewise Cardinal Pole. The Churchwardens—moved doubtless by strong motives—had the bells of Strood Church rung for

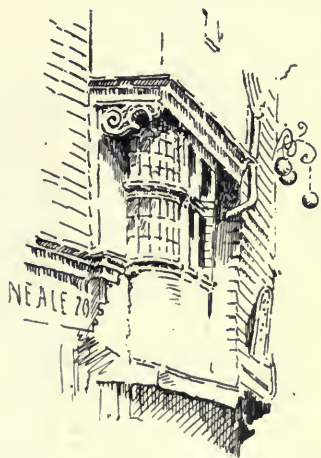
Philip, and the ringers were paid 6d. for their labour. Cardinal Pole bestowed the sum of 6s. to the parochial funds. Later in the same year Queen Mary passed through Strood in company with her husband, who, to her grief, was on his way to Dover, to leave her for some time. The bells rung out lustily once more, and the ringers received 13d. for their loyal exertions.

As the bells were frequently rung, the tackle constantly needed repair. When new leather baldricks were required, the Churchwardens used to buy a horse's hide, or half, wherewith to make them. In 1557 half a horse hide cost 20d., later on it rose to 2/6, and yet later a whole hide cost 8/-.

The bell ropes were usually bought at Shorne. In 1575 three bell ropes, weighing 27lb., cost 5/7. In 1622 two ropes, 17½lbs, cost 4/10. Prices varied, ranging up to 6/8 for two.

The Churchwardens' parish account book for many years included payments for rushes with which to strew the Church floor at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide. In 1620, nine bundles cost 1/6. In 1622, the Churchwardens paid 4d. for pease straw for this purpose. These entries show the vastly increased comforts of to-day with those of past ages. In the Palace of Queen Bess most of the floors were bare and strewn with rushes.

Shooting Butts formerly existed in Strood, but went to decay after the defeat of the Spanish Armada. James I. restored this practice, and in 1620 the Strood Butts were re-made, several labourers being employed. To facilitate the work "the hedge into Mr. Morland's\* tye" was cut to shorten the distance for fetching turves wherewith to cover the mound forming the butts. This hedge the Churchwardens made good. In 1622 these same officials paid 1/- to the King's Messenger for the order of shooting and other things.



JACOBÆAN WINDOW, HIGH ST.

Drawn by S. T. Aveling.

\* See Morland of "St. Peter's Place," The Gables.





A STROOD CHAP BOOK ILLUSTRATION:

"ABRAHAM OFFERING UP ISAAC."

Many old houses in Strood have brought down to us varying examples of the arts of our forefathers, some finding mention elsewhere.

In the house of Mr. Palmer, saddler, High Street, next the Angel, an old wall painting was discovered in the room next the

shop, which was, unfortunately, too much defaced to render its subject definable. In the room over the shop, and in the one adjoining, the ceilings are likewise thus ornamented. Its design may yet be faintly traced under the coatings of whitewash which cover it. The cupboard in the north corner of this upper room is unique, being painted in brilliant crimson; in the corners are finely executed heads of cherubs in gold. Opposite, viz., No. 95, formerly existed the interesting Jacobean window, which Mr. Aveling's sketch, on the preceding page, shows.

In the house of Mr. Sweet, postmaster, some curious old Dutch tiles formerly existed; they are now incorporated in Restoration House, Rochester. Upon one of the walls in this house were some antique paintings—the latter being, some years since, destroyed by the well-meant but ignorant zeal of a



A STROOD CHAP BOOK ILLUSTRATION:

"SEVEN CHAMPIONS OF CHRISTENDOM."

charwoman. Mr. H. Sweet has in his possession an oil portrait of a certain "Master Bigg, aged four years, 1647"—a paper label bearing this inscription being affixed. The father of "Master Bigg" was a cordwainer, formerly resident in that house. The late Mr. H. Wickham says, 18th July, 1870, "Thomas Bigg was rated to the relief of the poor in 1679, and was one of the Overseers of the poor in 1683."

The Master Bigg referred to became, as the label asserts, afterwards "Dr. Bigg, Doctor of Physick."

Mr. James Sweet, father of Mr. Henry Sweet, who originally hailed from Newcastle-on-Tyne, introduced the first printing press into Strood in 1814. Shortly afterwards he witnessed, marching past, day after day, thousands of soldiers, horses, guns, and other material of war. It was the gathering of the English forces making for the coast, and from thence to the field of Waterloo.



A STROOD CHAP BOOK ILLUSTRATION :

"THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS."

From this printing press were issued great quantities of ballad and chap book literature. For these issues, as they were struck off, long lines of expectant itinerants were frequently to be seen waiting for a supply. From a large number of these quaint blocks in Mr. Sweet's possession, the accompanying examples are taken.

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NOTE.—The writer is indebted to the late Canon Scott Robertson's *Strood in the Olden Time* for much material this Chapter contains. This zealous and learned antiquary, whose death was a public loss, had generously placed the contents of his Pamphlet at the writer's disposal. To all familiar with him, this was to be expected.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE BRIDGE.

“Now, therefore, am I come to the Bridge.”—*Lambarde.*

“Thousands in days of old have passed along  
“That stout old bridge, a gay and motley throng.  
“Priest, friar, knight, monk, gay cavalier,  
“Kings, haughty dames, and nobles have been here.”

*George Shirley.*

MENTION has already been made of the supposed Roman bridge. How long it endured after their withdrawal from Britain we do not know ; neither is there any evidence as to the date of erection of the Saxon wooden bridge which succeeded it.



ROCHESTER BRIDGE, PREVIOUS TO DEMOLITION.

Lambarde speaks of this Saxon bridge as more “auncient  
“in time, though lesse beautifull in woorke, which neither  
“stoode in the selfe place where this is, yet neither verie farre  
“off, for that crossed the water over against Stroud Hospitall :  
“and this latter is pitched some distance from thence to the  
“south.” Thorpe conjectured it to have been erected about 100  
years before the Norman conquest, during the reign of King



Edgar.\* Denne says "it appears to have been very ancient, and "erected a considerable time before King John: according to "Stow the first mention of a bridge in this place is in the year "1215."†

"It was utterly unlike any river bridge that we are accustomed to see, and resembled a modern light pier or small railway bridge of wood. . . . It was upheld by 9 piers of earth and stone; each pair of piers supported three huge horizontal beams of wood, and across these beams were laid planks which formed the roadway for men and horses. Admirable provision was made for the repairs of the bridge. Each pier was assigned to some great landowner, whose lands, mentioned by name, were charged with the cost of repairing that pier, together with the beams and planks above it."‡

The following memoranda was taken from an ancient record at Christ Church, Canterbury, and from a chapter, written in Anglo-Saxon, copied by Lambarde from the Textus Roffensis at Rochester Cathedral.

*"Memorandums plainly showing by whom the Bridge at Rochester should be repaired, as often as it is broken.*

"The land pier on the east side of the river shall be built or repaired by the Bishop of Rochester; to plank three virgates or yards, and to lay three sullivas or large beams on the bridge; this to be done by Borstale, Cuckstone, Frindsbury, and Stoke."

"The second pier belongs to Gillingham and Chatham; they shall lay three beams and plank one yard."

"The third pier belongs to the abovesaid Bishop of Rochester; he shall lay three beams and plank two yards and a half, and this to be done by Halling, Trottesclive, Malling, Southfleet, Stanes, Penenden, and Fakenham."

"The fourth pier is the King's; and he shall lay three beams and plank three yards and a half; to be done by Aylesford, and by all the Hundreds pertaining to it, and by those on the hills, by Ockley, by Smaland, and Cosington, and Dudsland, and Gislardsland, and Woldham, and Burham, and Acclife, and Horsted, and Farley, and Testan (Teston?) and Chalk, and Honhirst, and Edon, and Bonehold, and Lose, and Lillington, and Stockbury, and Sineland, and Daleland, and Leelebundland."

\* *Customale and Antiquities of Rochester.*

† *History of Rochester*, p. 41. "I have met with a reference as early as 1130, when a contribution of 3s. 4d. was made towards repairing the Bridge against the coming of King Henry I."—W. Brenchley Rye, *Arch. Cant.*, Vol. 17, p. 164.

‡ *Olden Strood*



"The fifth pier belongs to the Archbishop of Canterbury; and he shall plank four yards and lay three beams; and this shall be done by Wrotham, Maidstone, Wattringbury, Nettlested, the two Peckhams, Haselholt, Mereworth, Layborne, Swanton, Ofham, Ditton, and Westerham."

"The sixth pier to be done by Hollingborne and all that Hundred which belongs to it; four yards to plank and four beams to lay."

"The seventh and eighth piers belong to the men of the Hundred of Hoo; six beams to lay and four yards and a half to plank."

"The ninth and last pier belongs to the Archbishop of Canterbury, which is the West end; he shall lay three beams and plank four yards; this is to be done by Northfleet, Clive, Higham, Denton, Milton, Ludesdown, Mepham, Snodland, Berling, Paddlesworth, and all the men of that Valley."

"These shall repair the bridge at Rochester whenever it is broken; and let it be noticed that all the beams which are placed in this bridge ought to be of large dimensions, that they may well support the planks, and the great weight of all those things that pass over them."

Canon Scott-Robertson says—"At the Strood end of the Bridge there was a drawbridge and a strong tower or fortified gateway, like the barbican of a castle. As this fortified gate and the drawbridge *stood in Strood*, friends and foes approaching Rochester from the West made their parley with the gatekeepers and paid their tolls in Strood."

"I cannot," says Denne\* (p. 45), "ascertain the breadth of this bridge, but think it could not have been above ten feet. There was a wooden tower erected on it called a fortification, built with 'marvellous skill,' and it is probable was near the

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\* *Fisher's History of Rochester*.—This very accurate work was almost entirely written by the Rev. Samuel Denne, youngest son of Dr. John Denne, Archdeacon of Rochester. He was born at the Deanery of Westminster, June 13, 1730, and was educated at Bennet College, Cambridge. He was, in 1754, presented by the Dean and Chapter of Rochester to the Vicarage of Lamberhurst, in Kent; in 1767 to that of Wilmington, near Dartford; and in the same year to the Vicarage of Darent, having resigned Lamberhurst. He died at the age of 70 of a bilious disorder, which had tormented him for 40 years. For nearly the last two months of his life he was confined to the chair of his library, which, unassisted, he could never quit. He died, seated in his chair, on Saturday, 3rd August, 1799, without having kept his bed a single day. He was buried near his father in the Cathedral of Rochester. He contributed largely to the Archæological literature of his time, and was a very erudite and industrious man. (*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1827.)

Of Fisher, little can be stated, save that he was a bookseller, and started the first printing press at Rochester. His son, Thomas Fisher,—1781(?)–1836—was better known: he engraved many plates in Hasted's *History of Kent*.—(*Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 57, Pt. 2, pp. 6, 96.)

east end of the bridge, and was used as a gate for the defence of this passage. The bridge was secured with a balustrade which, with the tower, was doubtless kept in repair by Rochester and Strood."

That the above-mentioned balustrade was not very high and of little security to passengers, may be inferred from the following fact that "about the time of Richard I. one William De Elintune, son of Viscount Aufrid, a rash young man, not alighting from his horse, as was customary, the beast took fright and leaped into the river, by which accident they were both drowned."\*

The following narratives also bear upon the dangerous state of this old bridge.

#### KING EDWARD I., 1300.

In February of this year, as appears from the Wardrobe account of the 28th year of his reign, he made a progress into Kent. . . . On the 12th February "the King gave 12s. to Richard Lamberd, of the City of Rochester, in recompense for the loss sustained by him of a certain horse (*haken*) hired of him for the King's service, which, whilst crossing the bridge, was blown over by the wind into the Medway and there drowned. . . . In further illustration of the dangerous state of the ancient wooden bridge at Rochester, I would call attention to a curious French poem, narrating a catastrophe, not unlike the foregoing, but attended with a more pleasant result, which happened about this time to a poor minstrel or harper, who was crossing the bridge described as "very dangerous, and over which many a one had fallen." He had reached the "mid-way," when a violent gust of wind blew him into the Medway. In his distress he calls to the Virgin for help, *in English*—

"Help wsvyf, help wsvyf,  
Oiyer nu—I forga mi lyf."

And "our Lady" graciously deigns to save him, he all the while harping her praises as he floated down the stream. At length he lands about a league from the city, and followed by a crowd who had witnessed the minstrel's mishap, makes his way to a church "situated in the same place," to offer up his thanks to the Virgin for this miraculous act of preservation."†

*"A strange thing, yet very true, of a Young Gentleman, who being a little merrie with wine, came to Rochester, over the Bridge.*

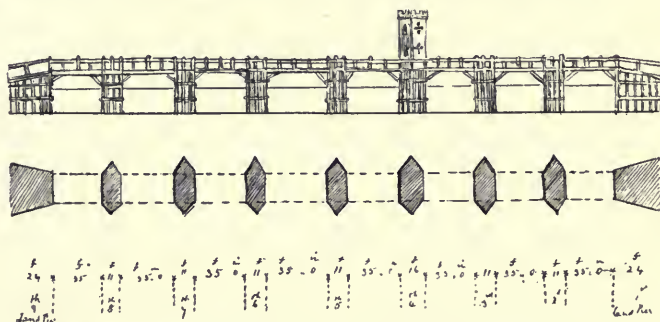
"'Tis known for truth, yet very strange, that a gentleman, being a little merrie with wine, came over Rochester Bridg on

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\* *Reg. Roff.*

† pp. 44, *Arch. Cant.*, Vol. VI.

horseback in the dark of the evening, there being but a plank laid over betwixt two arches, with small railles for foot folks only: he not knowing of it, nor his horse making no stop, when he came to his inne, the man bad him welcome, and wondering to see him there, asked him how and which way he came into the town. The gentleman replied, 'Over the Bridge.' 'Tis impossible,' said his host, 'for a horse to come over.' The other defended it. Next morning the Gentleman and his Host went to the Bridge, and he, seeing the height of it from the water, the narrownesse of the planke, and the greatness of the water, fell down dead immediately, and could not be recovered."\*



A PLAN AND ELEVATION OF THE ANCIENT TIMBER  
BRIDGE. A.D. 960—1387.

The accompanying illustration, copied from a print in the British Museum, (it likewise, in part, appears at page 213, *Arch. Cant.*, Vol. xvii.) will give the reader a clear idea of its structure.

It will be noticed that the tower is placed on the fourth pier (including the land pier) which but increases the difficulty of its real location. The drawing, however, is but a conjectural one, compiled from documents quoted by Hasted, and from particulars given by Lambarde. Although Denne (p. 45) says "the wooden tower" was probably on the east end of the bridge, he (at page 47) makes mention of the "inquisition by King Edward III.'s escheator Violstone, A.D. 1344," respecting the repair of the Bridge. "In this enquiry, mention is made of a drawbridge and barbican, the work of which belongs to the King; they were *both* on the *West* side, the barbican was probably a guard-house and watch-tower where a guard was posted for the security of the city; and the drawbridge might be over the west arch of the bridge to draw up on the approach of an enemy." The possibility has been suggested that there

\* Ibid. Vol. xvii., pp. 165-6.

"may have been two Towers at different times in succession." If so, this may explain the difficulty. The subject is left to the individual proclivities of the reader, like as Mr. Samuel Weller elected to do with the spelling of his name, although there is every probability of its location being in Strood. For patriotic considerations we elect so to regard it.

That the bridge was strongly fortified goes without doubt, as was Rochester also. This wooden bridge suffered much at various times from differing causes. On Good Friday, 1264, it was much damaged by Simon de Montfort,\* Earl of Leicester who, in the wars then raging betwixt Henry III. and the Barons, "girded the cittie of Rochester about with a mightie siege." In 1277 King Edward I. ordered the Sheriff of Kent to enquire into a complaint "lodged against the Master and Brethren of Strood Hospital, who had been distrained for repair of the head of Rochester Bridge next their own house. On enquiry it appeared that Bishop Glanville, founder of the Hospital, had built a stone quay, at the west end of the bridge, and some houses on the quay." The rents of these houses, and others near them, being appointed for the repairs of this portion of the bridge, which property Glanville had assigned to the Master and Brethren of the Hospital for that purpose. The monks pleaded that during the late siege by de Montfort, these houses were burnt or otherwise destroyed; the rents were thus lost, and they had used the materials for the repair of their chapel, which, presumably, also suffered much damage by the same operations. The monks argued that as they had lost their means of revenue they had at the same time lost their liabilities also; but the case was decided against them, and they had to find the money somehow or other. This frail structure was a never ceasing trouble; as only four years later, viz. 1281, after a long and severe frost, accompanied by a great quantity of snow, followed by a sudden thaw, the rapidity of the stream became so accelerated that huge cakes of ice were borne "with such impetuosity against the stone piers as to sweep them away and considerably damage the remainder." It continued a long time in a ruinous condition after this disaster, for in 1293, says Harris, "it was so broken and out of repair that people were

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\* See preceding chapter.



obliged to go over in boats, and the wharf at Rochester was so bad that all vessels used the wharf at Strood." These ordinances were carried out in a very perfunctory manner, for in the Patent Rolls are numerous references to Commissions appointed to enquire into the breaches of the bridge and the breaches of the regulations. Thus, on 26th January, 1332, Roger de Southwyk and John Frere, of Strood, were commissioned to survey the bridge, which was in a dangerous state owing to the default of certain men of the county who were bound to repair it; to find out who the culprits were, and to distrain upon them; and see that the necessary works were carried out.\* We learn that the bridge had been broken down by an inundation of the Medway, and Nicholas Heryng and Wm. Basyng, Master of Strood Hospital, were appointed for five years to see that the profits of the fairs at Rochester and Strood were devoted to the repair of the bridge.† In 1384‡ Thos. Brumlegh, the new Master of Strood Hospital, had to see that the tolls for five years were expended for the maintenance of the bridge.§ In 1384 Thomas Dodemere, parliamentary burgess for Rochester, and another were authorised to take stonemasons, carpenters, and labourers for the works on the footbridge over the Medway, between Rochester and Strood.||

Again in 1309 (*Arch. Cant.*, Vol. xvii., p. 164) it was much damaged by floating ice. As is usual in human nature, the contributory landowners and parishes, whenever and wherever possible, shirked these lawful burdens,—which were doubtless very onerous; the bridge was neglected and matters went from bad to worse. So it continued until the Inquisition of 1344 previously alluded to, when these long-neglected duties were again enforced. In common with the other contributory parties, Strood Hospital had again to furnish a heavy quota of cost to repair "the bridge and wharf from the drawbridge to the west end of it." However, Cliffe, Northfleet and several other parishes paid the chief of this particular charge, on condition that the rents of the wharf and tenements should release them from any such future taxation.

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\* Cal. Pat. Rolls, 6, Ed. III., p. 214.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid, Rich. II., p. 5.

§ Ibid, 8, Rich. II., p. 506.

|| Ibid, 6, Rich. II., p. 239.



On this occasion the repair was evidently substantial, but wear and tear (particularly after the taking of Calais, in 1347), had so augmented its use by the great and increased traffic, that the bridge became both insufficient and unsafe. It is difficult, if not impossible, to state the exact year (probably in 1387), in which the building of this mediæval stone bridge was begun.\* It was "completed," says Denne, in 1392.

The new bridge was chiefly the work of Sir Robert Knolles, a soldier of fortune, who carved his way from the position of a "common souldier to a most commendable capitaine" says Lambarde; for, as he continues, "after that he had been sent "Generall of an armie into France, and there (in despite of all "their power) had driven the people like sheepe before him, "wasting, burning, and destroying towns, castles, churches, "monasteries, and cities, in such wise and number that long "after, in memorie of his acte, the sharpe points and gable endes "of overthrowne houses and myasters, were called Knolles' "mitres: he returned into England, and meaning some way "to make himself beloved of his countriemen at home, as he "had beene every way dread and feared of straungers abroad, "by great policie mastered the river of Medway, and of his "owne charge made over it the

goodly worke that now stādeth,  
with a Chapel and Chauntrie,  
at the end, and died ful  
of yeares in ye midst  
of ye reigne of  
King Henry  
the fourth."

Sir John de Cobham joined with Sir Robert Knolles in this "goodly worke," but the current evidence of ancient authors is

\* The following yields helpful evidence:—"Next in antiquity to the Old Pope's Head is without doubt, the Ship and Turtle, in Leadenhall Street, which originally dates from A.D. 1377, in the reign of the unfortunate King Richard II."

"Ever since that time it has had for its Ground Landlords the Trustees and Wardens of Rochester Bridge, to whom it was given by Sir John de Cobham and William Wangford, . . . for the construction and maintainance of a stone Bridge over the Medway at Rochester."—*City Press*, 27th October, 1897.

This property is now let on lease at a yearly ground rent of £1,700.

that the expense of its actual *erection* was chiefly borne by Sir Robert Knolles.\*

This old stone bridge was nearer the Castle than the present structure, the chief cause of its erection in that spot being, not as it was described in the ancient parliamentary petition of Sir Robert Knolles, because it was "a better place," but rather by reason of the difficulties of building on the original site without first removing the old wooden one, and so destroying all means of passage during its erection. After its completion, Sir Robert Knolles and Lord Cobham petitioned the King in Parliament for a statute to support their new bridge, showing very accurately to the quarter of an inch the proportions of repairs to the several divisions according to the ancient regulations. It was duly made law by two enactments, in the 15 and 25 Richard II., that the bridge should be repaired by the localities so specified. The old chapel—the walls of which yet exist next the Bridgewardens' Chamber, on the Rochester Esplanade—was built by Sir John de Cobham, soon after the mediæval bridge was finished (1397).

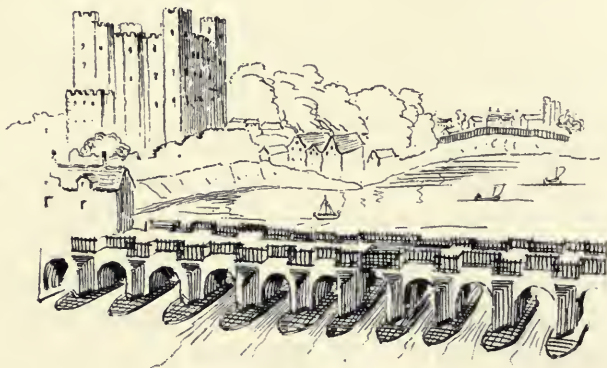
After about 60 years' wear the bridge became much dilapidated; there was some very faulty work on the Rochester side, and in 1445 calls for repairs were made once more, Rochester Priory and Convent giving 40s. towards this purpose. In 1489, it must again have been in a very bad condition, as "John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury, published a remission from Purgatory for 40 days of all manner of sins, to all such as would give anything towards its repair."

Though the method, as Denne aptly observes, "may appear somewhat extraordinary," it brought in such a "flowing tide" of monetary oblations, that not only was the bridge well repaired, but 20 years later Archbishop Warham (or Deane), adorned great part of the coping of the bridge with iron bars

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\* "In a late History of Rochester it is asserted that Sir Robert Knolles was the sole Founder of the Bridge—which surely is a mistake. He and Lord Cobham built it jointly at their own expense, and therefore, I think, may both justly be called founders of it. But Sir Robert, though one of the founders giving no estate to the support and endowment of it, cannot (as I apprehend) be so properly called, in the now and common received sense of the word, to have been a benefactor to it."—*Thorpe's Antiquities*, "p. 150.

neatly wrought,\* presumably with the surplus of this purgatorial ransom. It is stated that Warham did not live to complete this iron adornment, which was finished in the time of Lambard—1570.†



ROCHESTER BRIDGE, 1719.

It has been asserted, we do not know on what grounds, that, whilst many persons in Rochester furnished substantial sums to benefit by the 40 days' purgatorial grace alluded to, that no quota whatever came from Strood! Whether it is to be inferred that faith and morals ranged higher in our little town than it did in the city, or that the poverty of Strood was too great, or its love of money too deep-rooted to exchange it for this hypothetical benefit, is a matter left to the reader's adjustment. It may be safely taken, however, that generally speaking, "Sins were many and Saints but few."

Once more we have enforced upon us the need of precautions against human frailty and greed; for notwithstanding the Inquisition of 1344, and the two enactments of Richard II., and the appointments of many commissioners, the bridge, despite the patronage of Archbishops Morton and Warham, "continued in a ruinous condition." "The Wardens "not being yearly elected by the commonalty, continued in "office for many years together, in which time they let good "leases to their friends and servants, for long terms at old rents,

\* The coping was given by John Warner, a merchant of Rochester. Of "the ironwork, Weever, p. 231, says this was made by Archbishop Deane, "Warham's predecessor."—*Hasted*, Vol. iv., p. 79.

† There is mention of Joan Lambard being "christoned" at Strood Church, 1571.

"notwithstanding they were greatly increased everywhere, as was "the price of all materials for building." Thus the expense of repairing the bridge much exceeded its income, and the lands that were the absolute property of the bridge trust "were so "concealed, that very few knew that there were such, neither "were the lands contributory to the repair of it ever called upon "for that purpose."

Thus, despite the levying of a toll during the reigns of Queens Mary and Elizabeth, and a whole county tax of a fifteenth, "yet the work decayed more and more."\*



VIEW OF ROCHESTER BRIDGE—FROM AN OLD PRINT.

It is a gloomy picture—but a most true one—and such has ever been and ever will be, the outcome of public apathy. However, in the 16th year of that vigorous and many-sided spinster, Queen Elizabeth, this matter was inquired into, and two years later an Act was passed—considerably strengthened by another enactment nine years later—by which the crooked paths were made straight, the rightful shoulders put under the burthen, and a scheme for its governance instituted, under which riches have increased, the bridge has been nobly sustained, many public services rendered, and yet neither is the

\* *Hasted*, Vol. iv., pp. 80-1.



Bridgewardens' barrel of meal wasted, nor the cruse of oil diminished.\*

From the accompanying view the middle arch appears to have been constructed to open for the passing of vessels.

Though faulty, this old stone bridge was a noble structure, and for "height and strength was allowed," says Denne, "to be superior to any in England, excepting the bridges at London and Westminster." It is above 560ft. long, and 14ft. broad, with a stone parapet on each side, strongly coped and crowned with an iron balustrade. It has eleven arches, supported by strong and substantial piers. . . . The river has a considerable fall through these arches." From this we may safely conclude that the "iron balustrade" was yet *in situ* in 1772.

Structural alterations occurred at various periods—the two central arches were, for the greater convenience of navigation, converted into one, as the different illustrations will show.

That the iron railings were rather unique, and elicited considerable attention from foreigners, the following extract from the letter of a gentleman in the suite of the Ambassador of France goes to testify. "The country is beautiful," he writes, "especially near the large village of Rochester, which is "chiefly deservable on account of its bridge, furnished with "high iron railings that drunkards, *not uncommon here*, may not "mix water with their wine."†

Probably observations of this nature tended to bring these railings into disrepute—few of us like being told of our vices—and possibly accelerated their removal. In the place of these iron railings, probably about the beginning of the present century, were substituted the artistic stone balustrades which now adorn the Rochester Esplanade; to which place they were removed after the demolition of the mediæval stone bridge.

That the old bridge was sometimes abused for evil purposes—as indeed what good thing is not occasionally so prostituted—the following tragic narrative shows. Possibly, to prevent

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\* For these enduring benefits we stand much indebted to the efforts of Sir Roger Manwood, Queen Elizabeth's Chief Baron of Exchequer. For a most complete and interesting account of this chapter in the Bridge's history, see *Rochester Bridge*, A.D. 1561 (by A. A. Arnold, F.S.A., *Arch. Cant.*, Vol. xvii.)

† *Arch. Cant.*, Vol. vi., p. 64.



crimes like to it, rather than the saving of drunkards, may have led to the erection of Archbishop Warham's iron *chevaux de frise*. "When first the stone bridge was built, its low stone parapet had no protective railing upon it. At that time the wife of a citizen of Rochester, so the story goes, had a secret lover, and because she could not see him as often as she wished, they both plotted to slay her husband, which piece of villainy they traitorously performed. The deed done, they sewed the murdered body up in a piece of sackcloth, with



THE OLD BRIDGE AND CASTLE—BY MOONLIGHT.

intent, when it grew dark, to throw it over the bridge into the river, and thus to confide their crime to oblivion in the waters of the Medway. But the eye of Providence was upon them. Having performed their diabolical act, the wretches went with their load to the Bridge, the man going first with the corpse on his back, the woman following; she perceiving on the road that one of her husband's feet hung out of the sack, said "Stop, I will stitch up this foot that hangs out." In so doing, she, unknowingly, sewed the sack fast to her gallant's coat, and he, on coming to the parapet, threw the dead body over with such haste and violence that the weight of the murdered man drew the murderer over also; before the latter

had time to recollect or extricate himself, the waves received him linked to his burden, and he was instantly drowned. The miserable woman, who beheld aghast the fearful sight, fled home in terror, but found there no security. Shortly after, the bodies were taken up and recognized: the wife was arrested. Conscience-stricken, she confessed her participation in, and all she knew of, the crime. She was brought to trial, condemned, and executed." This story was originally told in quaint language in Thomas Lupton's *Thousand Notable Things*, Book XI., 1660, pp. 316-8\*, under the heading *The reason why that famous Rochester Bridge hath iron barres of great strength and height*.

After a long and useful career of 469 years, this mediæval bridge was demolished in 1857. The two illustrations—the originals of which were given to the writer by Mr. Thomas Lurcock—show the act and method of its destruction.

A local contemporary print, name and date of which the writer has not been able to trace, describes the operations as follows:—

#### DESTRUCTION OF OLD ROCHESTER BRIDGE.

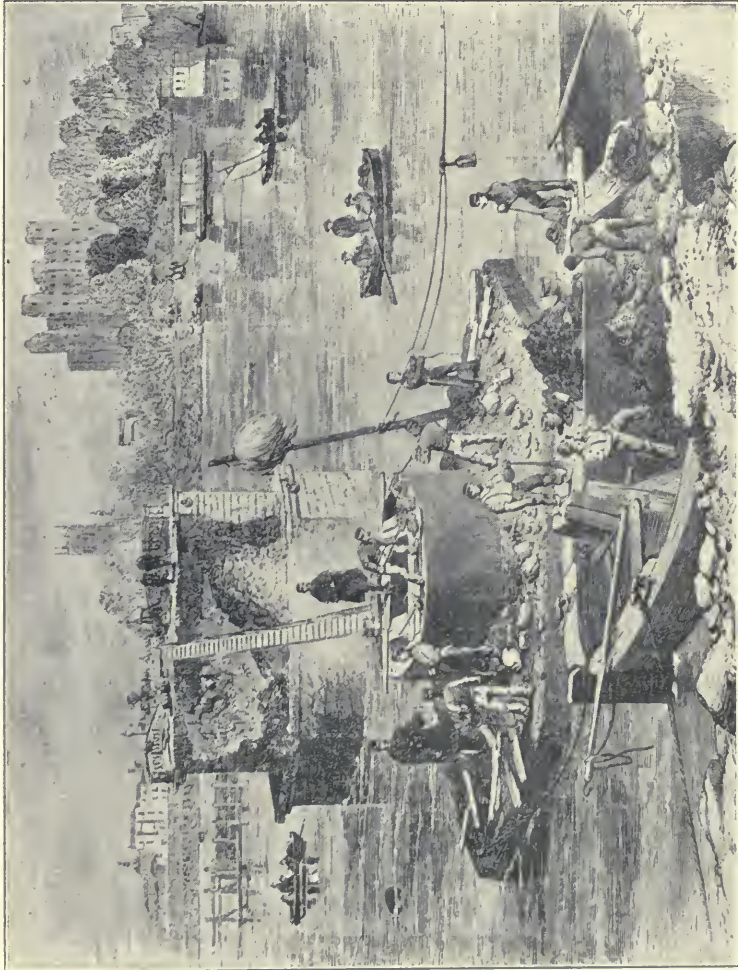
"Old Rochester Bridge has at length fallen; not, however, by time, but by 'villainous saltpetre.' The pier, a solid mass of masonry 45ft. long, 21ft. in depth, and 13ft. in width, was first mined; 300lbs. of powder were fired, and the huge blocks of masonry were by this small quantity so shaken from their position as to be easily removable. The pier was built on piles driven into the bed of the river, and it is evident that the force of the gunpowder had had as great an effect in loosening the foundations as upon the superstructure. This was as much the object of the engineers as to loosen the constituents of the pier, so that the materials might be readily detached without filling up the bed of the river—a result which was most successfully accomplished.

On Thursday week another and a larger portion of the bridge was destroyed. It consisted of the pier and abutment on which the large arch on the Strood side rested, and was calculated to contain several thousand tons of masonry. The weight of powder used in the explosions was nearly 1000lbs., and was divided into six charges, as in the previous experiments. Since November last the Sappers and Miners have been engaged in sinking two shafts in this portion of the bridge, which were excavated to the respective depths of 24ft. and 21ft.; one shaft having been sunk in the pier, and the other in the abutment. At the base of each shaft sprang two galleries, each 9ft. in

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\* *Arch. Cant.*, Vol. xvii., p. 165.

length, and in these were deposited the charges of powder. They were contained in tin waterproof cases, which were enclosed in wooden boxes; 500lbs. being required for blowing up the pier, and arch, and 300lbs in destroying the abutment. The keystones of the arch were removed by smaller blasts. The



DEMOLITION OF OLD BRIDGE—FILLING SHAFT PREVIOUS TO FIRING BATTERY.

Engineer troops deposited the charges on Thursday morning, when the operation of 'tamping' was proceeded with, and the whole of the approaches to the galleries carefully stopped up.

As soon the arrangements had been completed, Colonel Sandham ordered the bugle to be sounded, as a warning to those present to remove out of danger, and immediately afterwards

the bugler, sounded 'to fire.' The charges in the arch were first exploded, followed by those in the pier. The effect was very striking, the ground for some distance reverberating as if from the effects of an earthquake, while the pier crumbled in pieces and disappeared. The charges in the galleries on the pier abutment were afterwards fired, and that portion of the bridge was also destroyed. The large arch of the bridge was blown into the river, and the abutment on the Strood side entirely removed. Nearly one-half of the bridge was thus destroyed, and the remaining portion will be demolished as speedily as possible.

Notwithstanding a very heavy rain, an immense number of persons were present to witness the operations, and the troops of the Royal Engineers and the provisional Battalions were drawn up on the bank of the river and on the new iron bridge. The operations were also honoured by the presence of General Sir Charles W. Pasley, K.C.B., General Sir Harry D. Jones, K.C.B., General T. Blanshard, C.B., General P. Yule, Royal Engineers, and a large number of officers."

It is stated by Strood residents that portions of stone flew to unexpected distances by the force of the explosion. A soldier standing on the new bridge received a severe cut in the face; also a large piece of *debris* fell upon one of the paving stones of the new bridge and splintered in all directions, as though it were glass. Another huge block fell into the Crown Yard, where some spectators there standing had a narrow escape of their lives.

#### THE NEW BRIDGE.

The new bridge was erected by Messrs. Cochrane, from designs by Sir Wm. Cubitt, at a cost of £160,000, defrayed partly by accumulations of the bridge funds and partly by mortgage. The centre arch has a span of 178ft., the two side arches of 140ft. each.

The new bridge was commenced on the 16th April, 1850, by driving the first pile on the Strood side, and opened to the public on Wednesday, the 13th August, 1856.

The day appointed for the opening of the new bridge was one of great rejoicing, and it was observed as a general holiday. A procession was formed about half-past three o'clock, p.m., and proceeded towards the old bridge in the following order:

The Royal Marine Band,

The Wardens and Assistants,

With other gentlemen, among whom were the Earl of Romney





DEMOLITION OF ROCHESTER BRIDGE BY THE ROYAL ENGINEERS, 1856.



and E. Twopeny, Esq. (Wardens); the Earl of Darnley, W. M. Smith, Esq., W. Lee, Esq., C. Wykeham-Martin, Esq., M. Bell, Esq., and R. Tassell, Esq. (Assistant Wardens); Jas. M'Gregor, Esq., Sir H. T. Maddock, P. Wykeham-Martin, Esq., Sir William Cubitt, T. L. Hodges, Esq., &c., &c.;

The Macebearers of the Corporation,

The Mayor, Recorder, Corporation, and City Magistrates,

F. Furrell, Esq. (Mayor); James 'Espinasse, Esq. (Recorder); Aldermen Clements, Allen, King, Sidden, and Essell; Town Councillors Jesse Thomas, Ashenden, Cobb, Manclark, John Thomas, Everist, Stillwell, Robins, Balcomb, &c.; W. W. Hayward, Esq. (Clerk of the Peace); James Lewis, Esq. (Town Clerk); City Magistrates—Captain Burton, R.N., S. Steele, Esq., F. R. Coles, Esq., J. Foord, Esq.; R. Prall, Esq. (Clerk to the Magistrates).

The Mayor and Corporation of Maidstone,

Among whom were H. Argles, Esq. (Mayor); Aldermen Franklyn, Whichcord, Randall, and Stacey; Town Councillors Potts, Wimble, Joy, H. Wright, &c.; John Monckton, Esq., Town Clerk.

The procession went over the old bridge, and on arriving at the Strood side they took the scarcely finished road, forming the approach to the new bridge, where a great crowd had assembled. On arriving at the centre of the bridge, the procession stopped, and the Earl of Romney addressing the Mayor in these words, said—"On behalf of the Bridgewardens and their Assistants, I hereby declare that this bridge is open to the public."

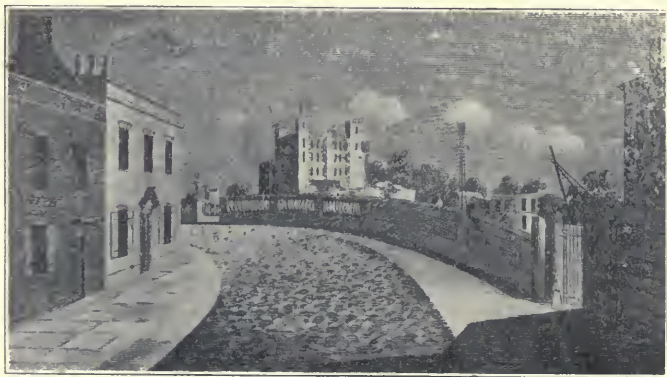
The Mayor, in an equally emphatic manner, expressed the thanks of the Corporation and citizens for the privilege granted.

In the evening a grand display of fireworks was exhibited on the old bridge; and the proceedings of an eventful day terminated, with the Englishman's usual wind up, of a splendid banquet at the Corn Market.

The building of the new bridge introduced the late Mr. J. Howell Ball to Strood. Messrs. Cochrane sublet several portions of their contract. Mr. Ball came to superintend one of these, viz., the timber work. His skill and organising qualities were such that Messrs. Cochrane engaged him to manage the

whole work—the foundations being already *in situ*. This he did to its completion, and to the entire satisfaction of all concerned.

From that time onward, until the 20th February, 1896, this beautiful structure—unfortunately marred, in its graceful outlines, by the supremely ugly double-ended coalscuttle erection of the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway—has been doing splendid service. It has bravely withstood storm and tempest, which history demonstrates to be serious, without a flaw. Even the mighty blows during the great frost of 1895,



STROOD END, ROCHESTER BRIDGE.

*From the Gentleman's Magazine, July, 1809.*

from the floating masses of ice,—borne by the tide as they were with the greatest impetuosity against its unshaken piers—did nothing to impair its stability or to give cause for anxiety. On the former date, an iron lighter, the property of Messrs. Cory, towed by a powerful tug, crashed into the spandril and girders of the central arch, causing much damage. The inconvenience to vehicular traffic during repair, by the hoarding which took up about half the width of the bridge passage, should do much to enforce on its present day users its advantages over the old structure, which was about half the width of the present commodious bridge.

When the accident occurred, few residents knew how near to a condition of total collapse that arch of the bridge had come. Its condition aroused the gravest anxiety, and all heavy locomotive traffic was promptly suspended. The Bridgewardens at once called in the services of Mr. Wm. Ball, who, with his staff,

worked day and night in ceaseless anxiety until the structure was safely shored. The accident occurring as it did in February, the danger and discomfort of the situation must be apparent to all familiar with the spot.

Messrs. Cochrane and Sons, who as already stated, were the builders of the new bridge, were employed to repair the damage. Their Foreman of Works, Mr. Wm. Chamberlain, courteously showed the writer the work of repair as it was in progress. Among the implements used for raising heavy masses of iron into their positions were hydraulic jacks, into six of which, connected by small brass or copper tubing, a child could pump the oil; and yet by the exercise of its puny strength lift the stupendous weight of 120 tons. These repairs were finished and the whole of the bridge again re-opened for traffic on Christmas morning, 1896.

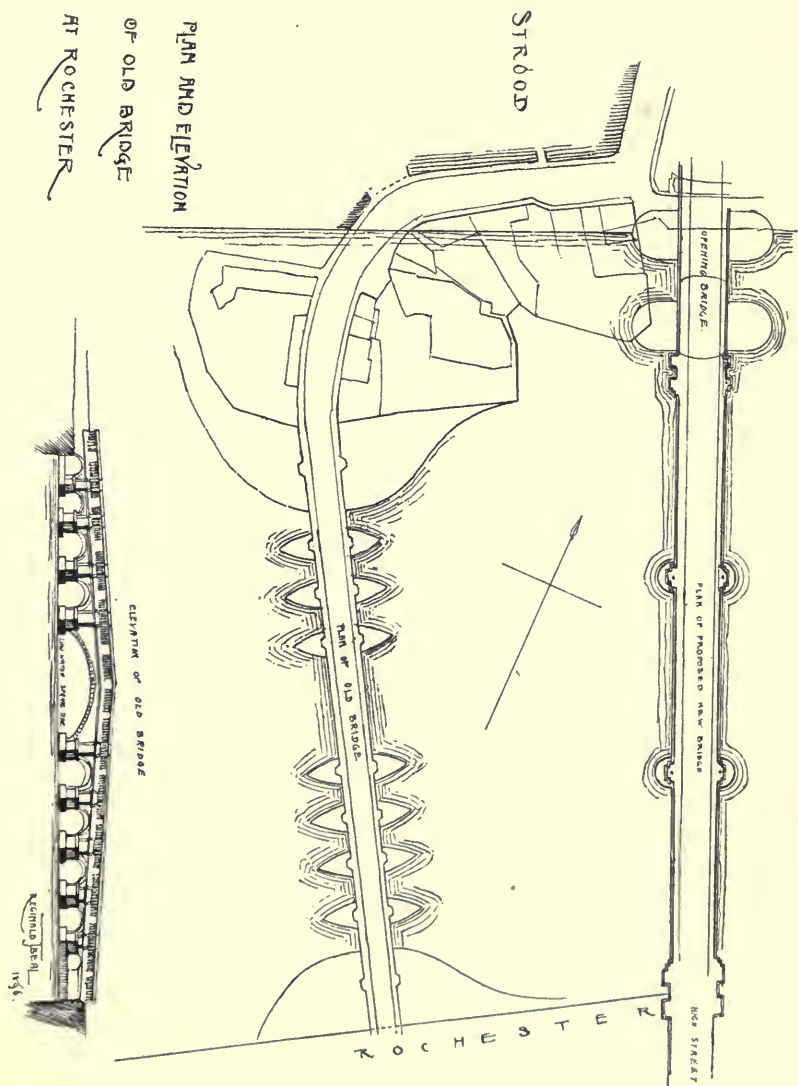
For the damage to the bridge alluded to the Bridgewardens sued Messrs. Cory in November, 1897, in the Royal Courts of Justice, before the Lord Chief Justice. The Jury decided in favour of the Bridgewardens. Messrs. Cory afterwards consented to pay to the Wardens the sum of £5,500. The repairs cost £6,000.

The west end of the present bridge was, by Government requirement, constructed to swing and allow for the passage of vessels. This operation was effected by mechanism (still *in situ*) erected in a brick chamber beneath. By its means two men could move this ponderous mass of ironwork. As the reasons which called for this form of construction have become obsolete and no longer apply, the roadway was, a few years ago, made permanent.

Running along the north parapet of the bridge are the pipes which supply Strood with gas. The accident to the bridge above alluded to fractured these pipes, and a temporary service was substituted on the pathway of the south side. On the completion of the repairs the present steel pipes were put in the place of the old, which were of cast iron. At the Strood end, the pipes pass from the north side and lie supported upon the girders under the swing portion of the bridge. The supply is then connected on the Strood Esplanade close to the bridge,

from whence it continues to the town. The new storm water drainage (low level) also enters the river under the bridge.

It may be mentioned that the Strood Trustees were in



favour of the erection of the new bridge. A return was made to the Bridgewards by Mr. Wickham of the rateable value of

Strood at that period (January, 1846), and the parochial liabilities are set out as follows :

Rateable value	..	..	..	£1465	10	0
Four Poor Rates	..	..	..	3s.	6d.	
One Church Rate	..	..	..	1s.	od.	
Higham (?)	..	..	..	os.	6d.	
				<hr/>		
				5s. od.		

Also liable to City Watch and Borough Rate.

#### ROCHESTER BRIDGE.—A POEM WRITTEN IN A.D. 1601.

This exceedingly scarce poem Mr. W. Brenchley Rye copied and inserted in the *Arch. Cant.*,\* together with other matter which finds previous mention.

##### I.

But Rochester shall echo forth my praise  
 If Rochester remaine not most ungratefull,  
 A sin in fashion for these humerous daies ;  
 To whom wee owe, to them wee are most hatefull.  
 O that it were in fashion ; I am sure  
 Nine daies (like wonders) fashions but endure.

##### II.

I must upbraide her else, not praises giving,  
 How first my favours patron'g'd her pride ;  
 But in too much remembrance of the living,  
 In darke oblivion dead men's praise wee hide.  
*A begar from the dunghill once extold,*  
*Forgets himselfe, whom what he was of olde.*

##### III.

When first her gravell-purified river,  
 No bridge upon her bore-lod'n bosome bore,  
 Some high renowne I strived for to give her,  
 And made a Bridge her swiftest current o'er.  
*Sir Robert Knowles* was in the same an actor,  
 But *Cobham* was the chiefest benefactor.

##### IV.

And *Walter Merton*, Merton's Colledge founder,  
 (Why doth mischance neere charitie thus dwell,)  
 With lime and sand 'gainst tempest-beating bound her,  
 Who from her top by great misfortune fell :  
 Riding along the workmen for to see,  
*Fortune is alwaies virtues enemye.*†

\* Vol. xvii., pp. 162-3.

† *Walter de Merton*. Accounts differ as to the manner of his death. *Kilburn (Survey of Kent*, p. 228) says he was drowned at Rochester, passing over the Medway in a boat. In the chronicle of Thos. Wilkes, that he fell from his horse fording a certain river, expiring shortly after his servants had brought him to the shore, on October 27th, 1277.



## V.

Kinde Rochester it seems hath yet respected  
 His name should in ages for to come,  
 In whose Memoriall lately is erected  
 An epitaph upon a marble tombe :  
     But one good turne another yet doth crave,  
     For this; they found a goblet in his grave.†

## VI.

*Warham th' Archbishop* of Canterbury,  
 The iron barres upon the Bridge bestow'd :  
*Warner* the copings did reedifie,  
 And many since their liberall minds have show'd,  
     Whose deedes in life (if deedes can Heaven merit)  
     Made them in death all heavenly joys inherit.

## VII.

Thus *Medway* by this faire stone Bridgè adornèd  
 Made *Thamesis* enamor'd of her beauty ;  
 All other rivers England had he scornèd,  
 Yielding to her kinde love—deserving duty, [ings,  
     In smiles, embracements, gracious lookes and greet-  
     In amorous kisses, murmures, night set meetings.

## IX.

Let mariners which shute his arches through,  
 Describe aright his length, his bredth, his beautie ;  
 Riding in's sight, they vaile their bonnet low,  
 And strike their top-saile in submissive duty :  
     He'el not be brav'd ; no vessel since the marriage,  
     Will he receive, but of a lowly carriage.

Four other verses, being somewhat excursive, as a topic,  
 from the Bridge proper, are omitted here.

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† Walter de Merton was a finely built and stately figure. In 1849 (? 54) his tomb was renovated, and his remains even in decay measured over six feet. The expense of erecting this sumptuous tomb (1598) was £70. The inlaid brass of Limoges work remains to-day a splendid example of the art of the period. It has been copied for the authorities of the South Kensington Museum, and was by one of their Lecturers pictorially exhibited at the Rochester Corn Exchange last year.

## CHAPTER IV. .

### THE OLD CHURCH.

“’Tis to the Church I call thee, and that place  
Where slept our fathers when they’d run their race.”

*Crabbe—(The Borough.)*

“Tread soft, ye mortals, o’er this hallow’d ground!

Full many gentle villagers here rest  
Who till’d in days of yore the fields around,  
With calm contentment, humble virtue b’est.

Go, seek the flow’ry paths of peace they trod,  
From guilt, ambition, and from sorrow, free;  
Like them, thy neighbours love, adore thy God,  
And for thy race, provide with industry.”

*Gentleman’s Magazine, Vol. 76. p. 848.*

THE Parish Church of Strood is dedicated to Saint Nicholas, the patron Saint of Sailors. For a hamlet, such as Strood was in bygone days, almost exclusively the home of fishermen and mariners, the choice is peculiarly appropriate. No date can be assigned to the earliest Church our parish possessed.

In the year A.D. 764, Offa, King of the Mercians, and Sigred, King of Kent, granted to Eardulph, Bishop of Rochester, a considerable quantity of land with its appurtenances, in Eslingham, otherwise Frindsbury,\* within which large parish Strood was, in ancient times, a hamlet, as is Upnor to-day. In erratic lines,† Frindsbury stretches away north-east to the boundaries of Hoo, and onwards to the like parochial limits of High Halstow, its boundary posts standing there on the banks of the Hundred of Hoo Railway. Westward, Frindsbury runs up to the “Crutches” Inn, on the Cobham Road. The sinuous line of these boundaries on the west bank of the river, as exemplified between Strood and Frindsbury, is due to the fact

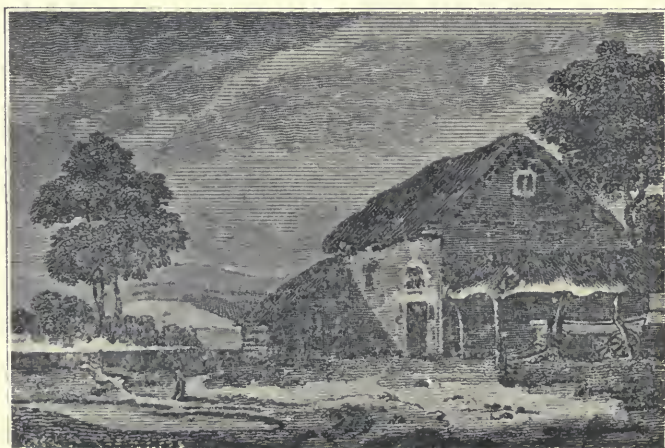
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\* p. 241, *History of Rochester.*

† Previous to 1887, certain land and marshes on the Thames bank betwixt Cooling and High Halstow, were included in the Parish of Frindsbury. They comprised an area of 522 acres, then representing a gross rental of £878 15s. od., and a rateable value of £828 10s. od. On the 25 March, 1887, this land was severed from Frindsbury and annexed to Cooling. The properties comprised “Eastborough Farm” and part of “Child’s Farm.” The marshes still retain the old title of “Frindsbury Marshes.”

that the original boundary was a stream in the marshes, whose course is marked by the present tortuous line.

Concerning our earliest Church, all our historians are silent. Possibly the first was constructed of wood, or wattle, daubed with mortar or cement, which our Saxon forefathers may have improved by erecting some building of stone; or it may have been of early Norman construction. In point of architecture it was probably of similar type to the chapel of Eslingham.\* Existing examples of similar buildings may be seen at Paddlesworth and Dode, near Snodland. Dode chapel is a roofless ruin;



PADDLESWORTH CHAPEL, KENT.

[From *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1804.]

that of Paddlesworth being used as a farm building, has been kept in weather-proof condition, being new roofed in 1845.† John (1125) the successor of Earndulph, granted Frindsbury with the Chapel of Strood annexed to it, to the monks of Rochester Priory, and Strood continued as a chapel-of-ease to Frindsbury till after the foundation of the hospital of Saint Mary Newark.‡

\* This Chapel was *rebuilt* between 1137 and 1144, and dedicated in honour of St. Peter. (*Cust. Roff.*, p. 116).

† *Memories of Malling*: Rev. C. H. Fielding; and *Early Norman Churches in the Medway Valley*: Rev. G. M. Livett, *Arch. Cant.*, Vol. xxi., p.p. 260-72.

‡ *History of Rochester*, p. 242.

Although our early Church was subordinate to that of Frindsbury, yet, according to Denne,\* “there appears to have been in or near Strood a parochial Church dedicated to Saint Martin.” In the confirmation by Archbishop Hubert of Bishop Glanville’s donation instruments to the Hospital of Newark, mention of this fact is made.† From a passage in Mr. Denne’s work (p. 8) he inferred that no Church existed in Frindsbury during the early part of Gundulph’s administration; although he directly adds, “it is difficult to imagine that so large a district could be left destitute of a place of public worship for nearly three centuries.” Decidedly, however, there is no evidence of a time when there was *no* Church in Strood. About 20 years after the death of Gundulph—in the first half of the 12th century—Paulinas, the Sacrist of Rochester, *re-built* Frindsbury Church of stone, and it appears also that he, at the same time, “repaired or ‘did up’ the Chapel of Strode.” The Textus makes no mention of a *new* Church at Strood, which, presuming such had been erected, it certainly would have done; and of its consecration and dedication. As the population grew, so did the Church; side aisles, chancel, tower, and chapels being thus added. Cox (p. 1099) says Strood Church was “erected and improved out of a chapel of the same name by Gilbert Glanville.”

In the time of Henry I.—1100-35—“the tithes of Stroud were the demesnes of the King, who gave them to the Church of St. Andrew in Rochester, towards the finding of lights there.”‡ After the establishment of Newark Hospital, Glanville in 1193—with the consent of Robert Pullus, or Poleyn, who was then Rector of Frindsbury and Archdeacon of Rochester—converted it into a separate parochial Church, and settled it upon the monks of Newark “in pure and perpetual alms, with all altarges belonging to it, as well of the living as the dead.” He decreed that the Master of the Hospital should possess this Church entirely, and should convert it to the use of the poor dwelling therein. He likewise assigned it a cemetery for the burial of the dead. The Master was to provide one of his brethren, who was to be a priest or other fit chaplain, who should celebrate

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\* *History of Rochester*, p. 242.

† *Reg. Roff*, p. 105.

‡ *Hasted*, 8vo, Vol. III., p. 457.

divine rites in it. Bishop Glanville also willed that "the priests and clerks serving in it should be discharged from all pecuniary contributions and exactions, as well to the Bishop as Archdeacon and Dean of the place, and others, excepting only synodals of old accustomed to be paid." In this situation this Church stood till the surrender of the Hospital of Newark in 1540.

When Glanville created Strood a separate parish, he undoubtedly conferred a great boon upon the inhabitants. Hitherto, all marriages, baptisms, burials, and like offices of the Church had to be sought and obtained at the mother establishment at Frindsbury. By this assignment the Bishop discharged Strood from every mark of dependence on Frindsbury; the actual wording of the instrument being as follows: viz.—"That the Church of St. Nicholas in Strode should be constituted a Mother Church, and have a burial ground allotted to it."\* Previous to this, Strood Church paid sixpence chrisin rent to the Mother Church of the diocese.† This Act discharged Strood of all claims on the part of Frindsbury; the right of sepulture being one of the chief parochial privileges, and generally the last to be granted to any subordinate district.

From the poll tax returns in the Record Office, in 1377, Canon Scott-Robertson estimates our parish then contained (including its beggars) a total of 302 souls.

Our churchyard, when first allotted for the purposes of burial, must have been small in extent, as in 1298 the Master of Newark Hospital (who was, by virtue of his office, also Vicar of Strood) gave a piece of land called *Le Sandpete*, for the enlargement of the cemetery. The most ancient graves in our

\* "Quam, de assensu et voluntate archidiaconi et personæ de Frendesbery matricem constituimus ecclesiam, proprium, eidem, cimiterium assignantes."—*Reg. Roff*, p. 632.

† Denne gives an erroneous reference to the Textus (Hearne's edition)—it should be page 230,—where a list of the Churches in the Diocese and the payments they made to the Cathedral, as the Mother Church of the Diocese "when they take the holy chrisin" is set out—Frindsbury Church paid ix*d.*, but Strood appears in the list of chapels (after the churches), and is entered thus—"Strodes, vi*d.*" This chrisin rent of Strood was an old custom in or about 1140.—*Hasted*.



churchyard are on the south side; this part of the cemetery has been closed many years.\*

The outward appearance of the old Church may be comprehended from the annexed illustration, which has been copied from the Beresford-Hope collection in the British Museum. No other print of this old Church has come before the writer, despite every effort to obtain such. The view is taken from the North-east. "It is," says Hasted, "a spacious building, consisting of a nave and two aisles, and the great chancel, with a tower steeple at the West end, in which is a clock and six bells. On the North side is a vestry-room, and underneath it is an ancient charnel-house. In the South aisle is a small stone Chapel, built in 1607." In speaking of Strood Church in 1719, Dr. Harris (see Vicars of Strood) says—"The Church of Stroud is a very handsome and large building, and in very good repair."† Being Vicar at the time these words were written, his testimony is conclusive. The South Chapel referred to was built, in all probability, by the family of Morland. Of this family, mention is made elsewhere in this work.

When Denne wrote the *History of Rochester* this property had passed from the Morland family to that of Gother,‡ and from the

\*THE NORTH SIDE OF THE CHURCHYARD.

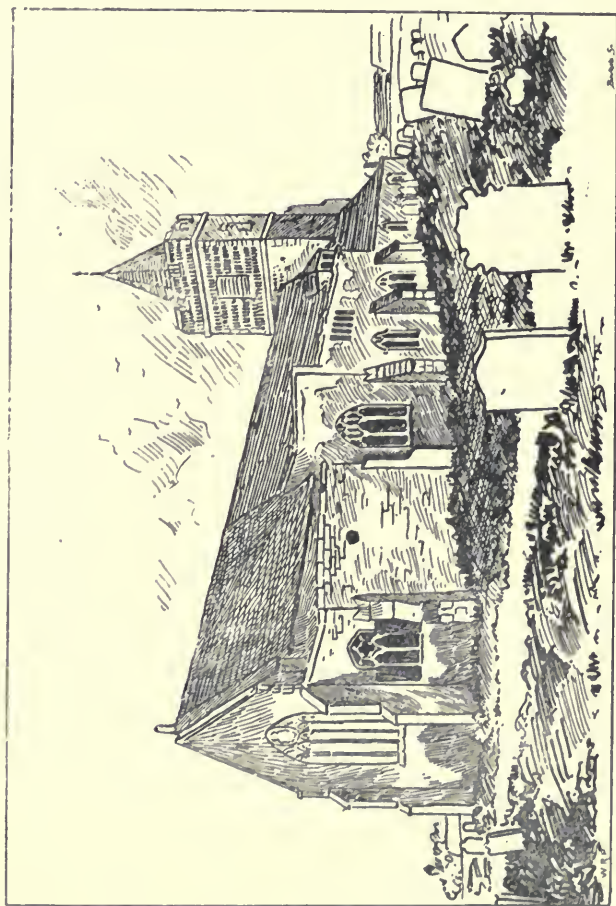
"There was, and may be still in some parts, a superstition against burial on the north side of the churchyard; that part was reserved for the interment of unbaptised infants, of persons excommunicated, of those executed, or of suicides." Benjamin Rhodes, Steward to the Earl of Elgin, "requested to be interred in the open churchyard on the North side (to cross the received superstition, as he thought, of the constant choice of the South side), near the new Chappell."—*White's Natural History of Selborne*. "All wish to be buried on the South Side, which is become such a mass of mortality that no person can be there interred without disturbing or displacing the bones of his ancestors. . . . At the East end are a few graves, yet none, till very lately, on the North side; but as two or three families of best repute have begun to bury in that quarter, prejudice may wear out by degrees, and their example be followed by the rest of the neighbourhood."—*Brand: Observations on Popular Antiquities*, p. 476. Edit. 1888.

† *History of Kent*, p. 303.

‡ STROOD CHANGE.—This was a building which formerly stood opposite the Ship Inn, and facing the High Street in its then bend to the old Bridge. It had a long return front facing Strood Hard. Entrance to the building was from the High Street. It consisted of a ground floor, paved, and was used as a meeting place for the dredgemen and others engaged in the Oyster Fishery. The side towards the Hard being open, the dredgemen were able to see the fleet of boats which then crowded the extensive hardway, often to the number of 100 or 200. The upper story was used as a store for material by the Oyster Fishery Company. The coal wharf next to this property was charged with an annuity of 5s., to be paid to the Churchwardens for the repair of the Gother family vault under this Chapel.

§ See Monuments in Old Church.

latter, by purchase, to Capt. Wood.\* In the pavement of this little Chapel were some fragments of mosaic work. Denne mentions that "The principal entrance" to the Church was by "the South door, through a large Gothic arch of Caen stone: this door and the walls of the chancel appear to be by much the most ancient



STROOD OLD CHURCH, KENT.

part of this fabric; at the West is a very substantial stone tower with a lofty steeple." He likewise mentions that it was a "spacious building, . . . extending from east to west upwards of one hundred feet, and in width fifty feet." On the South side of the altar were several recesses supported by pillars

\* See Monuments in Old Church,

of Petworth marble, and some appearance of an ancient altar having formerly existed at the same spot. In the chancel stood a handsome wainscott altar-piece, of the Corinthian order.

About 1446, Jane Mayhew, having charged her executors out of the produce of her estate to glaze the window of the belfry, they were presented in the Consistory Court for not having fulfilled her will. Not long afterwards William Rye bequeathed a legacy for erecting a battlement on the South aisle of the Church. The illustration being taken from the north-east, this feature of its ancient architecture cannot be seen. The chancel was dedicated to the Trinity (see Altar Lights) and an Altar to St. Mary (*Ibid*). In 1512 this latter was, on the Bishop's visitation, ordered to be repaired by the parish.

At Strood, the Churchwardens purchased an hour-glass in 1592; and in 1612 they paid viiid. for a "new running glass."\*

Structural alterations from time to time added, both externally and internally, other features of interest to this old fane.

The following donations left by will to Strood Church by some of our bygone inhabitants, will be found of interest.†

#### ALTAR LIGHTS.—OUR LADY.

To the bylding of or Lady Chapell in the same Church  
xl.—John Williams, 1501.

To the reparacion of or Ladie Chapell.—Robert Aslake,  
1511.

To or Ladie Light in the Chapell, ijd.—John Smith,  
1523.

To be buried wtin our Lady Chaunsell in Strode besides  
my father.—John Noone, 1520.

To or Lady Light in the querie iiijd. and or Lady Light  
in hur Chapell ijd.—Thomas Noone, 1523.

#### OUR LADY OF THE PILLAR.

To the Lyght of ouer Lady of the Peloure iij.—  
Margaret Cok, 1494.

To or Lady of the Pilor ij.—John Smith, 1523.

#### ST. NICHOLAS.

Thomas Hencote, 1473. Edmund Fuller, 1519.

#### ST. GEORGE.

John Herst, 1479. Wm. Bett, 1523.

\* *Arch. Cant.*, Vol. xi.

† From Vol. iii., Part 5, *St. Paul's Ecclesiological Society Trans.*, p.p. 283-4 and 291-2.

## HOLY TRINITY.

Thomas Hencote, 1473. To the byldyng of the Trinitie Chansel, xl.

John Rugbye, 1517. To the mayntenanonce of the lampe lighte in the Trinitie Chapell, xxd.

Isabell Wodcok, 1493. Agnes Blowfeld, 1525.

## ST. CHRISTOPHER.

Thomas Hencote, 1473. Johan Bet, 1507.

## ST. JOHN BAPTIST.

Marion Bervell, 1483. Jn. Goldoke, 1536.

## ST. ANNE.

John Herst, 1479. Edmund Fuller, 1519.

## ST. KATHERINE.

John Herst, 1479. Johan Bet, 1507.

## ST. ANTHONY.

John Rugbye, 1517.

## THE CROSS ALTAR.

To the Cross Auter of the said parish, a towell. Isabell Wodcok, 1493.

## BROTHERHOOD.

To the Bretherhod of ouer Lady, vis. viijd. John Wales, butcher, 1518.

To your Lady Broderhodd, xij. Thos. Wright, seissor, 1523.

## ST. JAMES.

Ad lum Sei Jacobi duo apiaria. Jn. Cowper, 1457.

## ST. SUNDAY.

To Saynt Sondaye, lighth under Saynt George id. Robert Aslake, 1511.

A taper of xijd. byfore the image of Saynt Sonday, John Russelle, mercer, 1497.

## ST. SITHE.

To the gyldyng of Seynt Sythe iij. John Munde, 1524.

## ST. MARGARET.

A taper of xijd. to bren before Saynt Margaret. John Noone, 1520.

## ST. ERASMUS.

John Noone, 1520.

## ST. PETER.

Johan Bet, 1507. Wm. Bett, 1523.

## ST. MARY MAGDALEN.

John Bet, 1507. I gif my best kerchief to the payntyng of Mary Magdalene. Agnes Blowfeld, 1525.

## ROOD.

Thos. Hencote, 1473. Lego lumini See Crucis in ye Rodeloft, iijd. Wm. Stace, 1473.



TRENDELL: PASCHAL.

To mayntene the high Crosse lighth, the Trendell and the Paschall, that no poor people paye thereto. Wm. Huntar, 1517.

SEPULCHRE.

To ye Sepulcre light, 4d. Jn. Goldoke, 1536.

ROOD.

"Ad le Pyller iuxta ostium australe"—Lum. crucis apud le Pyler. Thos. Stodfold, 1474.

Lum. See Crucis ad le Pyller iuxta ostium Australe in ecclesia predicta, iijd. Robert Sprever, 1474.

Ditto. John Herst, 1479. To the light of the rode at the south dore, jd. Robt. Aslake, 1511. Iuxta ostium boreale. Lum. See Crucis iuxta ostium boreale iijd. Wm. Stace, 1473.\*

Particulars previously given will assist the imagination in its efforts to picture the interior of our old Church.

From the tower stretched the nave, and from the nave spread out the north and southern aisles supported on gracefully turned arches springing from pillars of noble girth,† all embellished with the handiwork of our ancient craftsmen.

During the period of Catholic ascendancy—as indicated by the bequests to the altar lights—it must have presented a very picturesque appearance indeed, with its carven figures and pictures of Saints, its altars and their rich accompaniments.

At the east end stood the rood screen and loft—with, probably, a tower entrance to the latter, while about in varying positions were the monuments and raised tombs commemorative of our ancient dead.

Such, therefore, with all its priceless associations linked to an unbroken past of over seven hundred years, was the edifice

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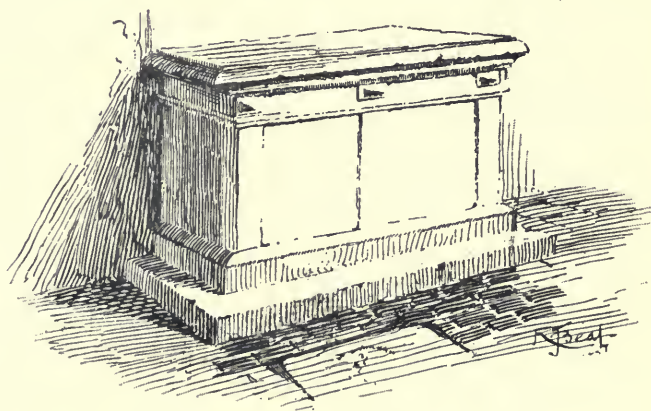
\* "The Property belonging to the Parishes during the centuries before "the great spoliation was enormous, and was always growing. It consisted "of houses and land; of flocks and herds; of precious jewels and costly "vessels of silver and gold; of ornaments and Church furniture; of bells "and candlesticks, crosses and organs, and tapestry and banners; of vestments which were miracles of splendour in their colours and materials, "and in the incomparable artistic finish of needlework; fine linen and veils, "carpets and hangings . . . and service books. . . . All "this immense treasure and wealth was strictly the property of the Parish." Dr. Jessop, pp. 51-2 *19th Century*, Jan. 1898.

† In the crypt below the present building, utilised as a base for a floor-supporting pillar, there yet remains a finely moulded plinth of one of these ancient columns. Though mutilated, its handsome proportions give eloquent indication of the loss Strood sustained by the destruction of its aged Church.



the pious labours of our forefathers erected and handed down to posterity, as a worthy inheritance through the succeeding generations of these centuries.

In May, 1810, this old Church was found to be in serious need of repair. As the course then decided, upon by our parochial leaders of that date brought very grievous injury upon the parish, the events which led up to this disaster will be followed somewhat closely, that the responsibility may justly rest upon the shoulders that should rightfully bear this burden. These records are taken respectively from the parish Vestry book, 1775-1857, and from the Trustee Journals, from 1812 onwards.



ALTAR TOMB IN STROOD OLD CHURCH.

For over half a century the inhabitants of Strood—at a time when they were but few in number, and the burden was, therefore, very great—bore the incubus of a heavy debt, attended by internal dissensions, animosity, and actual strife, which were also accompanied by a certain amount of public discredit.

Added to this we have to mourn the loss of an ancient and picturesque edifice—which, judiciously restored, would now present the appearance of a miniature Cathedral, beautiful in its architectural features and graceful outlines. This noble old building the vandals of that day destroyed, leaving not so much as one stone standing upon another. In its stead they erected the present unsightly structure, which has the dubious merit of being amongst the ugliest Churches in the kingdom. How these disasters arose the next chapter will show.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE CHURCH. DESTRUCTION—AND AFTER.

E'en now the devastation is begun,  
E'en now the business of destruction's done.  
*Goldsmith (Deserted Village).*

FROM the old parish Vestry book the following particulars are taken, which will enable the reader to comprehend the gradations of parochial feeling up to its final and deplorable conclusions.

On Thursday, 5th July, 1810, a Vestry of the inhabitants of Strood was called to receive the estimates of Richard West and Thomas Weeks (the younger) "for rebuilding and repairing the north wall of the Church, or a part of the same, pursuant to an order of Vestry made on the 31st May last," when "It was resolved that Mr. Richard West should be employed to take down and rebuild part of the north wall extending from the east end to the extremity of the said wall on the west of Mr. Friend's pew. To be done with flint and stone, with two lofty windows in the north wall and one in the east end, the Gothic windows to be composed of oak, to be built with hard mortar, and no soft sand to be used. [Observe this, my masters!] The mortar to be of the same quality within side as without, the whole to be completed in a good workman-like manner for £50 within three months from this date.

J. Lynn, Minister

John Reader,

John Iash,

Robt. Boreman,

Joseph King,

Thos. Dawson,

Chas. Mumford,

John Counsome,

David Day,

James Bridge,

Robert Coles.

Richard West."

As there have been considerable searchings of hearts among old Strood families, respecting the amount of responsibility anent the destruction of our old fane attaching to their respective ancestors, all signatures appear as they are recorded in our local book of fate, that those whose withers are unwrung may, like Macbeth of old, cry out and say, "Thou canst not say I did it!"

1811, March 1st:—"At a Vestry holden in the Parish Church of Strood . . . pursuant to publick notice given on Sunday last, to determine upon the objections which might be offered by any of parishioners against the existing Church

rate, when after waiting in the vestry-room of the Church one hour and upwards—from three to four in the afternoon—and no person making an appearance or objection [Was it any earthly use doing so?]  
—It was resolved and determined that the Churchwardens should without delay take the requisite steps to recover the arrears of the last rate which was made for the necessary repairs of the Church and ornaments of the same, and that the vestry clerk be instructed accordingly.

J. Lynn, Minister

John Reader,

James Bridge, gent.,

Robert Boreman,

Charles Munford.”

Then followed an important Vestry.

“At a Vestry holden in the Parish Church of Strood pursuant to public notice given for that purpose in the said Church during the time of Divine Service, for the parishioners to meet to view the repairs and take into consideration the present state of the Church, and the pews belonging to the same, and to determine upon the repairs and alterations absolutely necessary to be done and made for the support of the said Church and the accommodation of the parishioners,

“It was unanimously resolved that the tiling in the centre of the south side of the Church should be well and sufficiently repaired; the windows with the frames and glass necessarily altered and amended and casements added to the same; the ceiling and plastering of the interior part of the Church to be amended and made anew where necessary, and the whole whitewashed; the pavement of the Church to be relaid and amended where requisite; the pews on each side of the centre aisle to be brought out in front, leaving a space of 4ft. 8in. for the aisle, and such pews to be made good where necessary; the front of the gallery to be repaired and secured, and all other necessary alterations and amendments to be made where the same shall appear to the Minister and present Churchwardens with three of the parishioners now present to be necessary for the improvement of the Church and the accommodation of the inhabitants.

“It having been suggested that if pews were erected in the chancel that a greater number of parishioners might be accommodated with seats, it is recommended by this vestry that application be made to the Impropriators of the Great Tithe for leave to erect them, and upon consent being obtained such pews should be erected and built at the expense of the persons requiring the same.

“The Vestry doth also recommend that the expense of the repairs and necessary alterations above specified be defrayed by a one shilling rate, to be made in this and the succeeding years until the whole is discharged.

“The above vestry was held, and the resolutions made, in consequence of a letter from the Lord Bishop of Rochester,

who, it appears, hath made strict enquiry into the present state of the Church.

Jas. Lynn, Minister.

Robt. Boreman,

John Reader,

John Bundock,

Thos. Weeks,

Jos. King,

Wm. Friend,

Jno. J. Freeland,

J. Gibbs."

22nd June, 1811.—Vestries followed fast here. This also was "for the purpose of taking into consideration the present state of the Church and to determine what is absolutely necessary to be done to support the building, and insure the safety of the inhabitants, and whether it will be expedient to take the advice and opinion of a surveyor on the occasion, or whether the Churchwardens shall act according to the best of their judgment, with a committee to be appointed for that purpose.

"It is resolved that it will be necessary to take the opinion of a Surveyor before anything further is proceeded in.

"That a Committee be appointed to attend the Surveyor on his inspection on the state of the Church, and receive his opinion thereon, and afterwards to communicate the same to a meeting of the parishioners at large, to be convened for that purpose, and that a majority of the said Committee be competent to act.

That the following persons be of the Committee, viz. :—

Rev. James Lynn, Minister.

Mr. Robert Boreman, }  
Mr. John Reader, } Churchwardens.

Thomas Edward Hulkes, Esq. Mr. Rd. West, sen., Builder,

Mr. Friend, Hairdresser, Mr. Bathurst, Surgeon,

Mr. Wood, Mr. Lash,

Mr. Mallett, Mr. Gouge, Sadler,

Mr. James Bridge, gent., senr. Mr. Wright,

Mr. Charles Mumford, Mr. Buck,

Mr. J. Gibbs, Mr. Butcher.

"That the Committee do appoint a Surveyor for the purpose expressed in the above resolution.

Jas. Lynn, Minister.

Robert Boreman,

Thos. E. Hulkes,

Charles Mumford,

Wm. Friend,

Jas. Bridge,

Edw. Butcher,

John Brissenden,

Thomas Hatton,

George Telfer,

J. Rodmell,

J. Howes,

Js. Bridge, jun.,

Thomas Weeks,

John Gouge,

Js. Cooper,

Charles Bathurst,

John Reader,

G. L. Hodshon,

Thomas Wright,

Henry Dunning,

Wm. Rich,

John Bundock,

George Thomas."

22nd June, 1811.—At a meeting of the Committee appointed to nominate and choose a Surveyor to inspect into the state of the Church, pursuant to the foregoing resolutions—

“It was resolved that Mr. John Cooper, of Canterbury, be applied to for the purpose of giving his opinion on the present state of the Church, as a Surveyor.

J. Lynn, Minister.

Robert Boreman,	John Reader,	Thos. Ed. Hulkes,
J. Lash,	John Gouge,	William Friend,
Charles Mumford,	William Mallett	Ed. Butcher,
Wm. Wright,	Wm. Buck,	Js. Bridge,
Thomas Wood,	Charles Bathurst.”	

In accordance with this resolution Mr. Cooper was engaged to examine the Church and to furnish a report of its condition. It was presented at a meeting held in the Vestry Room of the Church, 25th June, 1811, and runs as follows :—

1.—That the outside walls of the said edifice were from time become very much out of upright, especially the north side, which was built chiefly with small stones and chalk, and in the workmanship badly executed.

2.—The south wall, which was built on the same construction and materials, but from the assistance it received from the different walls abutting to it, was not so much out of upright, yet from the aspect and at different periods the wet which had been suffered to get in had much decayed the timbers, especially that part of the roof which was flat and covered with lead. The whole of those timbers at their bearings were entirely rotten and in a very dangerous situation.

3.—The walls of the centre aisle, from the immense weight and pressure of the roof were also become very much out of upright, both leaning outwards and following the outside wall, which has caused a part of the tie beams to loose their hold and the roof in some degree to cripple, which was absolutely its then situation.

4.—The timbers of the roof and wall plates being chiefly of chestnut and the great length of time they had been up (and at many periods had received injury from the wet) were in many places become rotten, particularly the wall plates, the consequence of which had occasioned the separation of the tie beams from the said plates, which was the reason of the walls becoming out of upright as they then were.

Lastly.—That he was of opinion that the best and most judicious plan for the parishioners and inhabitants of the parish of Strood would be to take down and rebuild the said Church from the chancel to the steeple, the fabric being generally so dilapidated and dangerous.—Which if that was not done, but a repair determined on, the expense would be very great, and the attempt hazardous.”

“And which survey was signed by the said John Cooper. For these and other services Mr. Cooper was paid *24th March, 1814*, the sum of £116 9s. od.



"The Committee having taken the above report and opinion into their consideration, do recommend the inhabitants to erect and build a new church upon part of the new site and ground upon which the present edifice stands, and they advise that Mr. Cooper should prepare a plan and estimate of the expense, for which purpose they have instructed him.

"It is therefore resolved that such plan and estimate shall be prepared and sent to the Committee, and that the same together with the report and survey shall be laid before the parishioners for their inspection and further determination, at a meeting to be duly convened by hand bill or notice to be prepared for that purpose.

"Robert Boreman,  
"John Reader."

The above two worthy souls are alone the signatories to this important determination, and, apparently, the sole authors of the recommendation "to erect and build a new Church."

Pasted in at the end of this old vestry book there is, happily, a copy of the identical hand bill issued to the Parishioners. It is appended for the edification of the interested reader:—

#### "STROOD CHURCH.

"The Churchwardens having proceeded to carry into effect the Resolutions of a Vestry, holden in the Parish Church of Strood, on the Second day of May last, pursuant to Public Notice, for the purpose of viewing the Repairs, and taking into consideration the then state of the Church, and the Pews of the same, and to determine upon the repairs and alterations absolutely necessary to be done and made for support of the said Church, and the accommodation of the Parishioners,

#### "DO HEREBY GIVE NOTICE,

"That, upon examination, they find the whole of the interior, as well as exterior, part of the edifice in so ruinous and dilapidated a state, that they request the Parishioners to meet them on Saturday next, the 22nd instant, at Ten o'clock in the Forenoon, to view the same, and satisfy themselves what is absolutely necessary to be done to support the Building, and insure the safety of the Inhabitants.—Also to determine whether it will be expedient to take the advice and opinion of a Surveyor on the occasion, or whether the Churchwardens shall act to the best of their judgment and discretion, with the assistance of a Committee, to be then named and appointed for that purpose.

"Strood, June 18, 1811.

*"From the Press of W. Epps, Rochester.—1811."*

Though this important meeting duly took place, there is, whether by accident or design, no entry whatsoever as to any proposals or as to the resolutions of the inhabitants upon the subject they were called together to discuss! It is only possible to infer its nature from the next record, which is dated 14th August, 1811, and was held in the old Parish Church, within the shelter of whose tottering walls our parochial forbears once more entrusted their precious necks.

This meeting it states was called by "hand bill," and it recites matter of applications to Parliament for "enlarging the present or providing an additional workhouse," decided upon by the vestry held on 29th June, 1810. To that statement now appears for the *first time*, "Also for taking down, repairing, or rebuilding the Parish Church of Strood, and for raising money for that purpose."

"Resolved, that the above application be carried into effect, and that the Act of Parliament be drawn and prepared and then laid before the Committee appointed on the 29th day of June, 1810, or such other Committee as may be hereafter named, and the necessary measures taken to effectually pass and compleat the same. And that all the costs, charges and expenses incident to or attending the passing and obtaining the said Act be borne, paid and defrayed out of the first rates or assessments levied, raised or collected by virtue of the said Act.

"Also that application be made to the owners of the chancel and of the chapel on the south side of the Church to know upon what terms they will meet the Inhabitants in the general expense of repairing or rebuilding the said Church, and that when their answer or determination shall be received the same be communicated to the Parishioners who determine to defer the question of repairing the present Church until that period and the above Act of Parliament is compleated, and the Parishioners request the Churchwardens to give them notice accordingly.

"Also resolved, that the draft of the intended Act when prepared and approved by the Committee heretofore named, or the majority of them, be submitted to the general inspection of the Inhabitants.

J. Lynn, Minister.

James Bridge,  
Robt. Boreman,  
J. Reader,  
John Goldston,  
John Lash,  
Js. Maiden,

Thomas Freeland,  
Ed. Butcher,  
Wm. Friend,  
Davd. Day,  
Geo. Tilfer,  
Thos. Maiden,  
Thos. Weeks."

Thos. Ed. Hulkes,  
Wm. Rich,  
John Reader,  
John Gouge,  
Chas. Bathurst,  
Richd. West,

We now come to significant matter. Services held at Frindsbury.

1811. "At a Vestry holden in the Parish Church of Strood the Second day of October, 1811, pursuant to public notice given in the Parish Church of Frindsbury (to which place the Parochial duty is removed until the Church of Strood is repaired or rebuilt), and at which Notice was given on Sunday last to meet this day for the passing of the accounts of Robert Boreman and John Reader, the present Churchwardens, and also to make a Church Rate."

This Act of Parliament was obtained 25th March, 1812, and under its provisions were created the Strood Trustees. Its work in the administration of the poor law and other duties of local governance are dealt with elsewhere.

On the 9th of April, 1812, this newly-created body met for the first time. They were—

The Rev. James Lynn, in the chair.

James Horn (Overseer).

Thos. Edw. Hulkes	John Reader	John Gouge
George Telfer	Charles Bathurst	Thos. Maiden
John Lash	Thos. Wood	Wm. Friend
John Cobb	Edward Edwards	Edward Butcher
John Stubbersfield	John Fredk. Freeland	Robert Boreman
Henry Dunning	Thos. Joseph Bruncker	John Gibbs.

Of this list, the last was first in power for mischief.

After taking the oath the Trustees, by virtue of the powers vested in them, resolve to stop up, among several others, a wide, commodious, and very useful path, running from the corner of Caroline Place, through the Churchyard past the east window to the Workhouse, and on to Gun Lane. This was done to increase the accommodation for the burial of the dead. In their resolution the Trustees describe these paths as "totally unnecessary, and of no essential convenience to the public," a statement so palpably absurd, that it carries its own condemnation.

At this meeting the project to pull down the old Church and build a new one is carried *unanimously*.

This important question was again debated on the 30th April following, when Thos. Ed. Hulkes moved a resolution that the order passed on the 7th April, ordering that Mr. Smirke be applied to for a plan for a new Church be revoked. For Mr. Hulkes' most sensible proposition eight Trustees recorded their

votes; and *against* it nine.\* It will thus be seen that this deplorable decision was only carried by a majority of ONE. No record is given as to how the Trustees respectively voted.

At the same meeting a deputation, consisting of Messrs. Lynn (Vicar), Telfer, and Wood was ordered to wait upon "Samuel Baker, Esq., for his consent in writing to take down his private Chapel on the south side of the Church." Mr. Baker as part of the bargain, was to have "allotted to him a good and proper pew in the intended new Church for the use of the inhabitants of his messuage . . . . (see illustration, the Gables) situate in Strood . . . . in lieu of the same," and for the above consideration, in addition to "five shillings of lawful money of Great Britain," Mr. Baker on the 22nd of April, 1812, sold his birthright to the Trustees for the mess of pottage as here shown.

The monuments in the Church were to be "deposited in the Chancel for safety," along with the pulpit and "other property which the Trustees wish to preserve:" and it was further ordered that "the entrance from the body of the Church to the Chancel be closed." As the work progressed these monuments were removed from the Chancel to the Tower.

At this meeting "William Dicks, John Whetstone, and George Tanner" were charged with having broken the Church windows "and actually broken into the said Church." These juvenile depredators—for such we find them to have been—were brought before the Trustees at the next meeting, and after being "cautioned not to offend again," were let off.

Hence we may conclude that the precocity of youth is perennial.

17th April, 1812. It was "ordered that Mr. Smirke† be applied to for a plan and specification for the new Church.

\* It should be stated, although no record of the fact is given, that Mr. John Gowen tendered to restore the old Church at a cost of £600.

† "Smirke, Sir Robert, R.A., F.S.A., Hon. F.I.B.A. Architect of St. Nicholas, Strood; born 1781. Eldest son of the Artist, Robert Smirke, R.A. Chiefly patronised the Greek style. Concrete was habitually and systematically used by him. When fully employed, declined commissions under £10,000. Died 18th April, 1867; aged 87.

List of his works, too long to enumerate, includes many Castles and Mansions for the nobility, 17 Churches and Chapels (the only other Kentish one being St. John's, Chatham), Royal Mint, General Post Office, British Museum, Custom House, College of Physicians, Carlton Club House, Covent Garden Theatre, &c., &c.—*Dictionary of Architecture*.

The following bill of costs for destroying the old Church was ordered to be paid.

	£	s.	d.
Mr. West (bricklayer) .....	23	2	9½
Mr. Weeks (bricklayer) .....	27	9	3
Mr. Boreman (carpenter) .....	26	2	7½
Mr. Frost (wheelwright) .....	1	16	0
Mr. Hubbard (plumber) .....	1	5	1
Mr. Bray (plumber) .....	0	7	6
Mr. Sedgwick (blacksmith) .....	1	1	11
Mr. Pakes (wheelwright) .....	2	10	0
Mr. Lash (for baskets) .....	1	2	2
Mr. Rich (blacksmith) .....	1	1	4
Mr. Freeman (allowance to labourers) .....	0	3	4
Mr. Cobb (for Edward Shipton, watchman) ..	0	18	0
Watchmen from Workhouse .....	0	12	0
	<hr/>		
	£87	12	0

In Mr. West's account there was an error of £5 to the detriment of that gentleman. This sum the Trustees ordered to be paid to Mr. West at the meeting after the one following this. The total cost of the "taking down" operations are by no means covered by this sum (£92 12s. od. instead of £87 12s. od.), inasmuch as clearing away the foundations, etc., ran into a considerable figure. Furthermore, the legend runs in Strood, and there is but scant room to doubt the fact, that so substantial were certain portions of the old structure found to be, that blasting operations had to be employed to remove them. The fine old plinths of the tower are now *in situ*, as they were originally, and may be seen from below the belfry floors—they are of noble proportions. Happily, the tower, save outward embellishment, was left intact, thanks possibly, there is reason to believe, to its strength and sturdy resistance to assault, rather than to any relaxation of the iconoclastic vandalism of our progenitors of this era of Strood history. Upon this subject, however, presuming it to be as inferred, Mr. Stott (first Clerk to the Trustees) has preserved a discreet silence. Similarly it is a matter of accepted belief—there is also documentary evidence—and to this contention there are plenty of old Strood residents yet living who declare "our *fathers* have told us" that these magnates of their day journeyed over the country in hired



chariots, faring sumptuously on each occasion, in a mentally besotted condition—the legend goes even further and adds “physically” also to their charge—in a deluded effort to pick out a temple of imposing form and beauty, as a model from which our new fane was to arise. Somewhere in the neighbourhood of Lewisham\*—so the writer has been informed—this desideratum was finally found, but whether built of marble, stone, stucco, or wood, our benighted travellers were quite unable to say!

Much of the internal materials of the old Church were sold by auction by Mr. John Howes, who paid over as a result £109 19s. 3d. For his “commission” Mr. Howes charged £19 2s. od., which the Trustees describe as “exorbitant and unjustifiable.” Of the stonework, a large portion was used—notably in the south walls of the churchyard—where it still remains.

The following is a list of the ancient monuments that existed in the old Church of Strood.

They are taken from the *Registrum Roffense* (Thorpe, 1769).

#### In the Chancel.

On a gray stone—

Here lyeth the body of Joseph Cæsar, and Mary his wife. He had issue by her nine children—viz., Augustine, Elizabeth, Julius, Mary, Titus, Tiberius, Carolinus, Catherine, Frances, He died November the 20th, 1668. Ætat. suæ 41. She died April the 10th, 1701. Ætat. suæ 68.

Likewise, here lyeth the body of Julius Cæsar, son of Joseph and Mary Cæsar, who died April 29, 1712. Ætat. 55.

On a stone south of the former—

Here lyeth Robert and Margaret, children of Robert and Mary Curtis,

Robert	}	died	{	March the 8th, 1714.
Margaret				October the 31st, 1720.

On another north of that of Cæsar—

Under this stone lyeth interred the body of William Lewis, sone of William Lewis, Deputy Victualler of His Majesty's Navy at Chatham, who departed this life the 27th of May, 1639. Ætatis suæ. . . 3 . . annorum.

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\* See page 79.

On a stone north of the last is this inscription—

Here lyeth the body of Dorothy Punnett, the wife of Capt. Tho. Punnett, who departed this life the 29th of January, 1713. Aged 67 years.

On the south wall of the Chancel, on white marble, were these arms, viz.—

Sable on a fesse argent, between three Cornish choughs proper, as many fleurs de lis of the field, impaling ermine in a canton sable, a saltier or.

Underneath on a black table this inscription—

I. S. E.

Samuel Gibson, A.M.

*Ecclesiæ de Frindsbury quondam vicarius;*

*Quam provinciam piâ sedulitate,*

*Et integritate vitæ per 34. annos ornavit.*

*Religionem sine fūco et superstitione,*

*Doctrinam sine famæ auxilio coluit,*

*Ortu satis felix beneficentia major,*

*Utrumque taceri maluit.*

*Gravitatem morum cum suavitate composuit,*

*Pacis, quoad vixit, semina late sparsit,*

*Moriens amplam messem recepit,*

*Amorum satur (septuagenario paulo minor)*

*Animam Deo placide reddens, Feb. 10, 1724.*

*Priscilla, filia unica, superstes atque hæres,*

*Patri pariter ac matri clarissimæ Priscillæ,*

*In vita simul et in morte conjunctissima*

*Posuit.*

In the Nave.

Here lyeth the body of William, the son of William Furner of this Parish, who departed this life the 2nd of August, 1712, in the 19th year of his age.

Here also lyeth the body of Susanna, the wife of the said William Furner, who departed this life the 1st of September, 1712, in the 48th year of her age.

Here lieth also the body of Mr. William Furner, sen., who departed this life the 28th of May, ano. dom. 1722, aged 65.

On a stone west of the former—

Here lyeth the body of Mary Jelfe, daughter of Mrs. Mary Jelfe of this parish, widdow, who dyed the 2d of March, 1673, aged 23 years.

And also the body of Mr. Ferdo. Booth, late minister of this parish, who dyed the 4th of February, 1679, aged 35 years.

And also the body of the above-named Mrs. Mary Jelfe, widdow, who dyed the 2d of March, 1679, aged 63 years.

And also the body of Elizabeth, the daughter of the above-named Mr. Booth, and of Priscilla his wife, who died the 18th April, 1680, aged 4 years.

On a brass plate were the full length effigies of a man and three women: and this inscription—

Hic jacent Thomas Glover, Agnes, Alicia, and Ilina uxes, ej. q' obijt. xiii. animæ die mes February, anno dni. m<sup>o</sup>cccc<sup>o</sup>xliiii<sup>o</sup>. qr<sup>o</sup> animæ propitietur Deus. Amen.

On the stone in which the said plate is fixed were four coats on brass, of which only one remains, viz.—

A pair of shears between two gloves erected.

On two small stones, west of the last—

Here lyeth the body of Thomas Hayes, who departed this life the 12th day of May, anno dom. 1693, aged 65 years.

Near this place lyeth the body of Bethiah, the wife of Thomas Hayes, who departed this life the 16th day of April, 1690, aged 52 years.

On another stone near the Belfry was the following inscription—

Here lyeth interred the body of Jane Clive, wife of Mr. Richard Clive, who departed this life March 30th, 1700, aged 52 years.

In briefe, to speak thy praise let this suffice;  
Thou wast a wife most loving, modest, wise;  
A pious woman, to thy neighbours kind;  
A worthy mistress, and of a liberall mind.

Here also lyeth the body of Sarah Clive, the wife of Richard Clive, who departed this life the 13th of June, 1721.

In the North Aisle.

On a black marble in the north wall was this inscription—

Near this place lieth the body of Elizabeth, the daughter of Capt. James Gother, who departed this life the 6th of October, 1695, aged 25 years.

On an atchievment on the same wall were these arms, viz.—

Or, on a bend gules, three chaplets of the field, impaling argent, a fesse wavy between three griffins' heads, erased sable.

And the following inscription—

Near this place lyeth inter'd the body of Capt. Robert Wood, obijt 29 Jan<sup>y</sup>, anno 1702, ætat. 76.

On a gravestone was this inscription—

Here lyeth the body of Stephen Simmonds, late gunner of Her Majesty's Ship Britannia, who departed this life Nov. the 23d, 1703, ætat suæ 72. And the body of Elizabeth his wife, the daughter of Joseph and Mary Cæsar. He had by her seven children.

On another stone were these arms, viz.—

Three bars wavy surmounted of a chevron charged with as many martlets impaling two coats quarterly; (1) a lion rampant, (2) four mullets (2 and 2), on a chief three more.

And this inscription—

Here lyeth interred the body of Christopher Venman, gent., who died June the 17th, 1710, aged 41.

On a gravestone near the former is this inscription—

Here lyeth the bodys of Samuel Holwill and Elizabeth his wife; and two children, Edward and Elizabeth. He died June 21st, 1699, ætat. suæ 75.

In the South Aisle.

On a gravestone is the effigy of a religious person, and round the edge of the stone this inscription in capital Saxon letters—

RI: PVR: LALME: MARIOBE: E: IOHAN:  
CREYE: PRIERA: CIS: VINS: IURS: DE:  
PARDYN: AVERA.\*

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\* 1327—1377. "At Westminster, Easter in one month Ao 4—between Stephen Creye, of Strode, plaintiff, and Stephen Pedman, of Shorne, and Alice his wife, defendants, of 2 acres land, with appurtenances, in Strode, Stephen P. and Alice admit it to be the right of Stephen C., and for themselves and the heirs of Alice grant to him and to his heirs, and receive 20s. for the concession."—*Archæologia Cantiana*, vol. xviii., p. 350.

On a grave stone near the west end is the following inscription—

Here lyeth the body of Eleanor Evans, late wife of William Evans, of Windsor, gentleman, Sept. 16, 1705, aged 77.

On a stone east of the former—

Here lyeth the body of Rose, the wife of Thomas Hind, who departed this life the 28th of October, 1722, aged 70 years.

On a gravestone near the last is this inscription—

Here lyeth the body of Mary Play, who departed this life the 17th day of January, 1711, aged 54.

And also her husband, John Play, who departed the 12th day of May, 1699, aged 73.



ANCIENT GRAVE STONE IN STROOD CHURCH, KENT.

In a Chapel, South of the South Aisle.

On the south wall, on two atchievements, were these arms, viz.—

i. Or, on a bend gules, three chaplets of the field, impaling argent, on a bend gules, between six cross crolets of the last, three lozenges as the field.

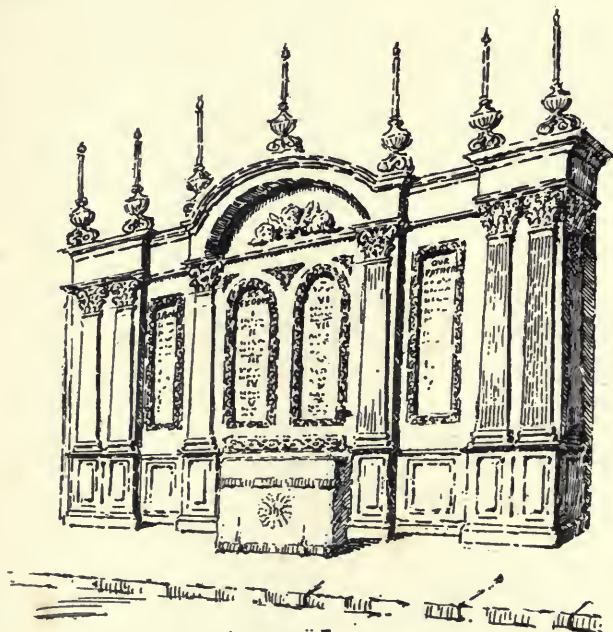
ii. Or, on a bend gules, three chaplets of the field, impaling parted per fesse, sable and gules, two boars heads erased argent; armed Or.

On the north wall, over the door, was this inscription—

This Chapel was bought and repaired by Capt. Richard Wood, anno domini 1705.



On the 1st September, 1814, the Trustees "resolved that the Altar Piece of the late Church be offered to the Minister and Churchwardens of the parish of Frindsbury as a small compensation and token of gratitude which the Trustees of this parish feel for the great accommodation which they have afforded the inhabitants of Strood, in allowing them the use of their Parish Church during the re-building of the New Church of Strood."



ALTAR • PIECE • FORMERLY • IN • STROOD • CHURCH •

At the restoration of Frindsbury Church, this altar piece was sold to Mr. Stephen Aveling. It found, and happily still finds its resting place in the staircase of Restoration House, Rochester.

The accompanying sketch, drawn from memory—which Mr. Aveling kindly furnishes—gives the best obtainable features of its form and design. The seven candlesticks were of wood, and the candles were also made from the same material. These latter illuminants were painted white to imitate the genuine waxen article—and as may be observed, were no "rascally *Dips*, but sound, round, tenpenny moulds of four to the pound." Our Strood wood candles had *gilt* flames.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE NEW CHURCH.

“Why this was moulded on a porringer!”  
—*Shakespeare's Taming of the Shrew.*

WE learn from the Trustee records that “the first stone of the New Church was laid at the south-east corner by the Rev. Jas. Lynn, Vicar, 30th December, 1812,” and the Church was opened at 10.30 on Sunday morning, 9th October, 1814, “by the Revd. James Lynn, M.A., Vicar, and by the Revd. Richard Symonds Joynes, M.A., Fellow of Catherine Hall, Cambridge, his Curate.”

“By and with the approbation of the Rev. Mr. Lynn,” the Trustees resolved “that *upon no occasion whatever* is the Church, pews, seats, or chandelier to be dressed with yew, holly, or any other shrub or matter as heretofore.”\* A copy of this document was served upon Mr. John Howes, the Parish Clerk, together with other enactments touching that gentleman's coming duties, all of which he was bidden righteously to carry out.

On the 7th October, 1814, the Trustees, who had, they say, made “unwearied study to offend no one,” allotted the seats of the

#### \* CHURCH DECORATIONS.

How far the decking of Churches with evergreens at Christmas is a survival or adaptation of a Pagan custom is not needful to consider, sufficient to say that formerly the usage was universal.

“In some places the setting up Holly, Ivy, Rosemary, Bayes, Yew, &c., “in Churches at Christmas is still in use.”—Coles: *Art of Simpling*, 1656.

“When Rosemary and Bays, the poet's crown,  
Are bawl'd in frequent cries throughout the town;  
The judge, the festival of Christmas near,—  
Christmas, the joyous period of the year!  
Now with bright Holly all the temples strow,  
With laurel green and sacred Mistletoe.”—Gay's *Trivia*.

“Among the annual disbursements of the Church of St. Mary-at-hill, London, we find the following: ‘Holme [*i. e.*, Holly] and Ivy at Christmas Eve, iiijd.” In the Churchwardens' accounts of St. Lawrence's Parish, Reading, for 1505, we read: “It. Pay'd to Mackrell for the Holly bush agay Christmas, ijd.” And in those of St. Martin Outwich, London, for 1524, is: “It'm. For Holy and Ivey at Christmas, ijd. ;” and for 1525: “Pay'd for Holy and Ivey at Chrystmas, ijd.” Similarly in those of the Parish of St. Margaret, Westminster, 1647, we read: “Item. Paid for Rosemarie and Bayes that was stuck about the Church at Christmas, 1s. 6d.”—Brand's *Observations on Popular Antiquities*, pp. 278-283.

Church to the parishioners by ballot. Messrs. Freeland, Howes, Kidd, Telfer, Wood, Goldstone, and Gibbs were told off for this duty, to "class, arrange, and dispose of the pews"—not to *sell* them, as from the wording one might be inclined to infer, but to allot them after the manner already mentioned.

No mention is made of what monuments were ordered to be re-erected in the new Church, if any. The following contains all needed particulars of all the tablets now existing in the building; those marked with an asterisk are tablets taken down from the old church and re-erected in the new.

#### South Wall, nearest Belfrey.

Double tablet to the memory of John and Elizabeth Boghurst, died respectively July, 1815, and the 20th May, 1820.

The next is to the memory of \*Samuel Gibson, A.M. (See preceding chapter.)

East of the south door, on the same wall, is a tablet surmounted with a coat of arms. The inscription is as follows—

Henry Sheafe, attorney-at-law, died 16th February, 1752, aged 59.

Elizabeth Sheafe, his wife, died 3rd November, 1757, aged 56.

Robert Tayler, attorney-at-law, died 17th January, 1762, aged 44 years.

Ann Tayler, wife of above and daughter of Henry and Elizabeth Sheafe, died 17th February, 1782, aged 61 years.

Sarah Sheafe, daughter of above Henry and Elizabeth Sheafe, died 17th January, 1783, in the 51st year of her age.

Sarah Sheafe erected this stone in memory of the above.

Arms of Sheaf or Sheafe—Erminoiois, on a chevron gules, between three pellets, three sheafs or.

Next is to the memory of Penelope Hulkes and Jacobus Hulkes, 29th January, 1821.

Also one to Edwardus Thomas Day Hulkes, A.R.M.

#### On the East Wall, South of Chancel.

To Millicent, the wife of John Gibbs, Solicitor, died 21st January, 1818, aged 59 years.

The deceased was the surviving daughter of Robert Polhill, A.M., Vicar of Goudhurst and Rector of Shadoxhurst.

## East Wall, North of the Chancel.

In a vault near this monument is interred the body of Mr. Thos. Fry, late of this parish, who died at Rainham, 23rd August, 1832, aged 68 years.

Also the body of Elizabeth, wife of the above, who died 10th April, 1842, aged 69 years.

Another to Davidus Hermitage Day, and Maria his widow, MDCCCLII.

## A well executed tablet

To the memory of Thos. Stevens, and Frances his wife, aged respectively 95 and 63 years.

On the North Wall, east end, is a small tablet erected by the *Daily Telegraph* to the younger of the Brothers Pocock. It is worded as follows—

In memory of Edward Pocock, fourth son of Henry Joseph and Ann Pocock, of Upnor, formerly member of the Choir of this Church, who died 17th January, 1875, aged 23 years, at Chiwyu, in Central Africa, upon the Anglo-American expedition to discover the sources of the Nile. Doing his duty well.

The next is a double tablet to the memory of the following persons—

William Falshaw, died April 22nd, 1801. To Ann Falshaw, died 12th March, 1832; also to a daughter aged 2 years, who died 17th July, 1790. Also to Thomas Edward Hulkes, Thomas William Hulkes, Ann Hulkes, and to Annie Maria Hulkes, who died respectively 24th January, 1824, July 28th, 1831, December 25th, 1871, and February 29th, 1872.

The latter is the donor of the important Charity now dispensed by the Trustees. The family grave lies under a substantial tomb, surrounded with iron railings, and shielded from the weather by a zinc covered canopy. It is nearly in front of the Church clock on the west side of the entrance gates.

Near to the Vestry door, also on the north wall, we come to another tablet—

\* To the memory of Captain William Curling, who died ye 19th August, 1746, aged 70 years; and Sarah, his wife, who died 17th August, 1746, aged 67 years.

Captain John Gunston died January 8th, 1752.

In memory of William Curling Gunston, son of the above, second mate of the "Calcutta." Died in India, September 30th, 1761, aged 21.



Sarah Gunston, wife of Captain John Gunston, died December 10th, 1774, aged 63.

There is a touching pathos in the records of this monument. The poor old Captain lost his wife on the 17th, and died himself two days later! Thus in the pathetic language of David, "In their death they were not divided." In like manner the demise of the young mate of the "Calcutta," at the early age of 21, has a melancholy significance.

North Wall, west of Vestry door, we come to another—

To the memory of Roberte Beresford, A.M., Vicarii de Goudhurst, quii obit. October, A.D. 1736, ætat 92.

Its next neighbour brings us down to a nearer date, being *in memoriam* of the family of Barrow, and is as follows—

In memory of Francis Barrow, of this Parish, Esquire, who died 18th November, 1810, aged 61, and of Elizabeth his wife, who died the 19th day of July, 1815, aged 52 years. Also to four children of the above, who died infants.

The Rev. Francis Barrow, their eldest son, for sixteen years Vicar of Cranbrook, and for twenty-eight years a Justice of the Peace for this County, died at Cranbrook on the 7th February, A.D. 1858, aged 66 years.

His only son, Francis Barrow, Esquire, M.A., some time Recorder of Rochester, and Judge of the Leicestershire County Court, died 13th May, 1888, aged 67 years.

The Barrows were much identified with Strood in the past, and the signature of the first-named finds itself much in evidence in the parochial books of his time, and was always written with much neatness and clerical grace.

Very near to the west wall we come upon the last, but by no means least, of the monumental tablets in the Church. It is surmounted by a coat of arms, and worded as follows:—

Underneath are the bodys of Mary, the wife of William Slaughter, Esqre., Obit 19th December, 1704, Eæt 37; and Mary their daughter, who died an Infant. This Marble is put up in Memory of them by Dame Elizabeth Roberts, their only surviving child, and Wife of Sir Walter Roberts, of Glastonbury, in this County, Bart. 1740.\*

The material which secures this monument in position is in a rather crumbling condition, and any attention that may be

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\* The Roberts', of Glastonbury, near Cranbrook, are among the oldest of Kent families.



paid to it with a view to its safety, and to that of the person who sits beneath, will certainly not be labour thrown away.

On the south side of the east wall of the Church there formerly existed a monument to the memory of

THOMAS WILLIAM HULKES.

This gentleman met his death by drowning in the pond attached to Strood Watermill. It was thought that his death was predetermined owing to domestic troubles. This monument, which bore language capable of a severe interpretation, was removed to facilitate the designs of some alterations carried out in the Church during the incumbency of Mr. Mayne. The following, as given from memory by an old inhabitant, formed part of its wording—

“Honest, unsuspecting, upright, and sincere,

Was the man whose untimely death this tablet records.

*O Lord, Thou hast seen my wrong; Judge Thou my cause.*

—Lam. Jeremiah, chap. iii., v. 59.”

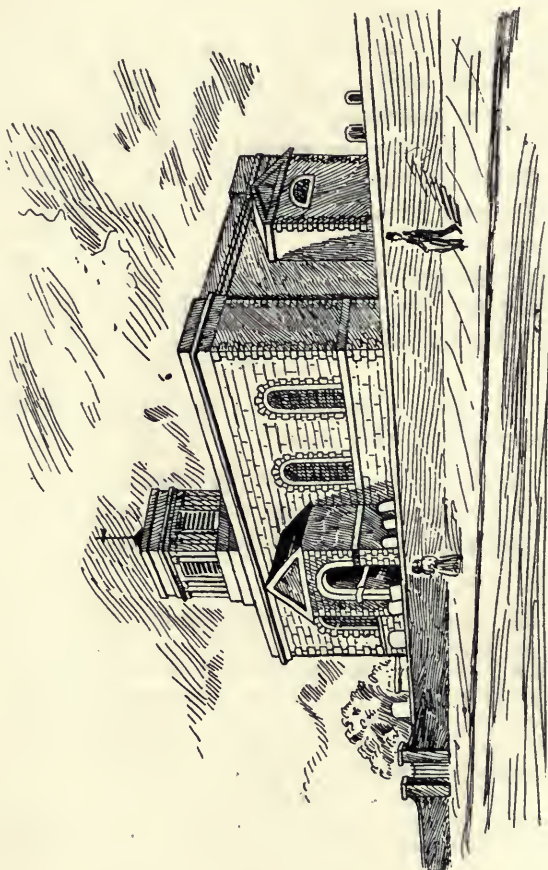
As the new Church appeared in 1838 it is presented to the reader on the following page.

Of its architecture, cost, and the disposal of the ancient monuments, the following, taken from the 2nd edition of the *History of Rochester*, p. 254 (published by Wildish, Chatham), will be found of interest.

“The old Church, with the exception of the Tower, was wholly taken down, and the present neat (?) and spacious edifice erected on the site which it originally occupied. This new Church, both in its external and internal construction, bears evident marks of elegance and taste, (?) and exhibits that kind of simplicity so much to be preferred to the crowded and ill-disposed ornaments frequently found in structures of this class. . . . . The attention which is uniformly paid to the preservation of this beautiful fabric, and to the decent appearance of the cemetery belonging to it, is creditable to the parishioners and merits great commendation. There were a few monuments in the old Church; but as they exhibited nothing either remarkable or curious (!) they have not been replaced in the new one, but are deposited in the Tower, where they are *carefully preserved (!)* Many of the gravestones in the floor were also broken; even those which escaped damage were afterwards so capriciously removed by the workmen, that scarcely one of them can be said to cover the remains of the person whom it was intended to commemorate.

“The expense of rebuilding, completing, and finishing the Church, tower, and cemetery, exceeded £8,500, and was

defrayed partly by borrowing £3,400 on annuities, and by giving securities on the rates to the amount of £4,200, and partly by a public subscription, which produced £1,254. Towards this subscription the people of Strood, to their honour be it recorded, contributed £325; and the remaining part of it—viz. £929—was raised by voluntary contributions from divers benevolent and



THE NEW CHURCH, STROOD.

well-disposed persons residing in the neighbouring parishes, who, by the assistance thus seasonably afforded to a parish of small extent and greatly burdened with poor, to enable them to rebuild their Church, evinced a spirit of liberality which can never be sufficiently commended, and a zeal for the support of the established religion highly deserving of imitation on similar occasions."

Comment upon this mistaken eulogy of a type of architecture supreme in its ugliness is superfluous. The statements

of fact the writer gives are, however, trustworthy and of historic value.

The 'Trustees' records confirm the assertion relating to the placing of the monuments in the tower. From thence they were removed to the crypt. In this receptacle the Trustees of that day caused to be deposited about 300 loads of rubbish—*debris* of the old building. Somewhere, under this material, the monuments from the old Church are presumed to be hidden.

As may be inferred from previous chapters (see also "Our Vicars"), many past residents of Strood *are* buried under the Church. How many, it is impossible to tell, as with but few exceptions they are all covered by this accumulated rubbish.

Near the entrance to the crypt—which latter aperture is directly under the tower arch opening to the Church—a space has been partially cleared, and several tombs, with a little trouble, may be examined.

Fronting this entrance is an altar tomb which records the decease on "the 7th August, 1806, of Robert Biggar." The same stone also makes mention of the death of "Mary, wife of John Boghurst, died March 30th, 1794, aged 84."

About the middle of the crypt is the tomb of "William Barrow, Lieutenant of His Majesty's Navy, son of ye above John Barrow, who died 6th June, 1772, aged 27." It may be added that the Lieutenant is pretty safely "sealed down," as a brick furnace (disused) covers a large portion of this stone.

Near by is another tomb, to the memory of "William Phillips,\* gentleman, and Sarah, his wife, before the wife of the said Mr. Christopher Venman." A floor-supporting pillar stands also on this stone, and blots out with much completeness all such announcements as were intended to immortalise the said Mr. Venman, save and except the two words "Mr. Christopher."

A finely engraved coat of arms heads the inscription on this tomb. Near to the entrance, on the north side, is another tomb of the Venmans. It records the decease of "Christopher Venman, senr. Obiit. 25<sup>o</sup> Novembr. 1703. Ætat 32."

The writer (see local papers 4th April,—and *ante*, 1896) unsuccessfully endeavoured to induce his brother Trustees to

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\* Possibly this William Phillips may have been a descendant of the widow who left a charitable bequest to our parish.

uncover these tombs, clear the crypt, and restore to their former positions in the Church such monuments as might be found.

The new Church soon presented serious structural defects and from which parochial trouble arose. Within a few months of erection its squat roof admitted the rain; thus creating damage and discomfort.

By February, 1815, it was also found that the Church Rate was insufficient to pay the calls made upon the parish by the debt thus created, and our Trustees decided to "raise the assessments" as an aid in this direction.

Despite several attempts to remedy it the rain still found its way in at the east and south windows, and through the Church and tower roofs. The Trustees' records mention that from this cause the seats on the south side of the Church were "unserviceable." A nice picture, truly.

By March, 1831, the Church roof was found to "be in a dilapidated condition." Mr. Baker, contractor, of Rochester (who constructed it), agreed to repair it for £141. Instead, he sent in a bill of costs for £221 2s. 11d., and the Trustees, after delays and many wrathful protestations against it, eventually, and with sorrowful hearts, paid this swollen sum.

So matters went on with a Church rate that, for a long series of years, never dropped below 2s. in the £. Thus, though the pockets of our fathers were lightened by these heavy exactions, their hearts grew heavy and their tempers waxed warm.

Many Nonconformists never paid the rate, but suffered their goods to be distrained and sold in default. It is not to be wondered at that discontent found utterance.

In pulling down some old houses that formerly existed on the south side of the High Street, opposite the "Red Lion and Star," a copy of the following printed doggerel lines was found.

*Written at the Supposed Finishing of St\*\*\*d Church.*

I.

Wise acts will be produced, when wise men rule the roast,  
But such a versa versa case, as St\*\*\*d may truly boast.

II.

Four-and-twenty of their men, And they are called Trustees,  
Have formed themselves a committee, To do just what they please.



## III.

They are chosen by the weight of purse, For wisdom here doth fail,  
For sense is often called a curse, When folly does prevail.

## IV.

The son of law\* do lead the van, He's allowed but little skill,  
Only barking at a parish feast, And making out a bill.

## V.

Whate'er he says it shall be done, None dare with him dispute,  
In Saint Giles' culling they'll him shun, He can them all refute.

## VI.

They pitied the old Church, and viewed its crazy (?) crown,  
In one of their gigantic act, Resolved to pull it down.

## VII.

For imitation of some Church, Them three to Lewisham went,  
To see the mettal, shape, and size, Those three were fully bent.

## VIII.

But Lord! how different was the case, Their senses all alone,  
They did not know the Church's face, Or whether 'twas wood or stone.

## IX.

But what to do or how to act, There is none of them so cunning,  
For distant sense they off did pack, On message straight to Lunnon.

## X.

Down came Sm\*\*ke that very man, And what d'ye think to do?  
To draw them out a larger plan, And build their Church anew.

## XI.

They thought they had not in their clan, And science path so trod,  
A man to draw them out a plan, To build a house to God.

## XII.

In the next town there is two men, Who in affluence do roll,  
They contracted for the Church, And that's to do the whole.

## XIII.

Being contract work they rattled on, All for the sake of gain,  
They slighted all the holy place, Which now lets in the rain.

## XIV.

Their pride and poverty was shown, By building of this Church,  
Their Parson saw them into debt, And left them in the lurch.

## XV.

They'll sell their bells† in spite of fate, So strange though true  
the news,  
Likewise unroof their new built Church, And alter all the pews.

J. RAWLINGS.

*From the Press of W. Epps, Rochester.*

\* Mr. John Gibbs.

† See Trustee Records, 16th May, 1850.



Though no surprise need be felt that the name of Mr. Rawlings fails to appear among the Poets Laureate of our realm, we are none the less obliged to that worthy gentleman for the information his lines convey.

Finally matters reached a crisis. The Trustees raised the rate to 2s. 6d. in the £. By section lxvii. of the Act of 1812, power was given the Trustees to levy a rate "Not *exceeding* 2s. in the £," upon all the property of the Parish, Likewise, by section lxxxv., they were limited to the sum of £7,000 as the total amount that could be borrowed under the powers of the Act.

The Trustees originally borrowed—

On Annuities . . . . .	£3,400
On Mortgage Security of the Rates . .	<u>£4,400</u>
Total . . . . .	£7,800

They had therefore, in the first instance, exceeded the limits of their borrowing powers, and also levied a rate "exceeding 2s. in the £." Large numbers of the parishioners rebelled, and taking advantage of this illegality, refused to pay the rate at all! A chaotic condition of things followed, which reached its culminating point in 1839. On the 21st March in this year, the Trustees met and *unanimously* passed a series of five resolutions of censure upon Mr. Gibbs, as follows—

- 1st. For that he advised the Trustees to borrow more money than the sum they were legally entitled to borrow. That "the instruments falsely called securities were executed in his office," and were "signed by himself," and he was, therefore, responsible for the disaster.
- 2nd. "That Mr. Gibbs . . . . being a Trustee has on his individual authority, without consulting the other Trustees, under the Act of 1812, applied to Parliament to incur a further debt of £3,000 for an Act to remedy his own blunders, and to fix the Parish with the costs of the application."
- 3rd. "That Mr. Gibbs' conduct is highly censurable, inasmuch as under the fair pretext of paying the creditors, he proposes by the Bill now before Parliament to incur a further debt of £3,000, and for the future to levy a rate of 2s. 6d. in the £ on the present assessment, equal to 3s. 9d. in the £ on the late assessment."

This seems to justify the local appellation of "'King' Gibbs," a title by which he was very well known in Strood.

To resume :

- 4th. That Mr. Gibbs . . . has presumed to go to Parliament on the petition of two creditors out of nine, and 32 ratepayers out of 400, and has introduced a clause in the Bill to pay for every attempt . . . to remedy his own blunders, thus securing to himself the power of charging for every act of his own, however unusual, weak, and unwarranted in legal practice.
- 5th. That a petition of the Trustees founded on the above resolutions be presented to Parliament against the second reading of the Strood Church Bill.

This makes highly instructive reading; and however bad the half-hour Mr. Gibbs subsequently underwent, there is no reason to doubt his deservings, and that Strood has had good reason to execrate his name. It should be remembered, however, in fairness to Mr. Gibbs, that the local Act of 1812 gave unusual powers to Strood for its own governance, that have on many occasions—and we trust will for many more to come—stood it in good stead. It also (a rare feature at that time) provided that any “one of the people called *Quakers*” might make affirmation in lieu of taking the oath of qualification.

This self-seeking effort of Mr. Gibbs was pulverized; and on the 6th June, 1839, the Trustees gratefully passed votes of thanks to the “Parliamentary representatives of the City of Rochester and of the Western Division of the County,” for “the judicious and efficient services they have rendered the Parish of Strood in the late division . . . for the second reading of the Strood Church Bill.” The assistance of the Religious Freedom Society is also heartily acknowledged for the “efficient and decided part they have taken in-opposing the Strood Church Bill.”

A compromise was afterwards effected, and a Supplementary Act was obtained in 1840, which legalised the over-borrowings of 1812, and again restricted the rate to 2s. in the £. To the cost of this new Act, by agreement, the creditors and annuitants paid one-half, and the parish the other.

In the preamble of the Act of 1840 the deplorable condition of the parochial finance and consequent discredit, is eloquently observable.

The above censure of Mr. Gibbs also shows that time had brought its revenges. The exactions and animosities born of

the Church Creditors' Rate caused the iron to enter into the souls of the parishioners; and men who knew not the Joseph of the former day, were, as vacancies occurred, put into the lapsed places of those who did. Payments for Church matters were now keenly scrutinised.

4th February, 1841. Trustees order payment of £2 3s. od. Visitation fees." The order was opposed. At the next meeting (25th February) Mr. J. Saxelby Cobb was in the chair, but in the stormy scene which ensued Mr. Cobb vacated his seat; which, with no better effect to follow, the Rev. Mr. Deacon then filled. Unable to pour oil on the troubled waters the rev. gentleman "resigned the office," "and Mr. Samuel Wheeler was appointed Chairman."

Hitherto, the majority of the Trustees had been of the old order, and carried out their work in a vigorous, if not unanimous manner. But the new Act, the ingathering of old arrears after a period of partial success in resisting this rate, united to the conscientious objections to the exaction, had caused the inevitable effect. New Trustees took the place of those defunct, and gradually gained a dominant power. The following protest was presented to the Trustees, and it was "resolved and ordered that the same be now entered in the minute book."

#### COPY OF PROTEST.

"We, the undersigned Trustees, wishing to relieve ourselves as far as possible of all responsibility in reference to the order of the 4th instant, for the payment of £2 3s. od., Visitation and other fees, do hereby most distinctly protest against such order.

1st.—Because to tax the whole community for the benefit of one sect of Christian professors is manifestly unjust and a violation of the Christian rule of doing unto others as we would they should do to us.

2nd.—Because this act of injustice becomes doubly oppressive when connected with ceremonies and observances to which the injured person conscientiously objects.

3rd.—Because we believe the said order to be illegal, being a direct violation of the 6th of the Local Act of 3rd Vic.

4th.—Because we believe the proposed appropriation of the money never to have been contemplated either by the petitioners for the Bill, or by the Legislature, or by the Trustees when they made the rate; being therefore a mal-appropriation of the public property, and liable to entail much litigation and expense on the parish.

5th.—Because the support of such a measure would be highly dishonourable on the part of those who, while the Bill was before Parliament, professed their intention that it should not be employed to meet any other demand than the costs of the Act and the claims of the creditors and annuitants.

6th.—Because, notwithstanding the *unanimous* resolution of the 17th instant, we think there is great danger of this order becoming a precedent for the payment of similar claims in future.

(Signed)

FREDERICK WHEELER  
WILLIAM HORSNAIL  
RICHARD MARSH  
JAMES ELVY  
THOMAS COOPER."

"Resolved, that the allegations contained in the above protest are worthy the serious consideration of the Trustees."

On the 30th March, 1841, the Vicar, the Rev. Robert Deacon, proposed that £40 10s. od., the salary of "Mr. William Pearce Hurley," the verger, be paid. Mr. William E. Horsnail proposed an amendment, viz.—that the "gentlemen who had enjoyed the services of Mr. William Pearce Hurley" pay him themselves. Carried by a majority of two. However, on the 5th May, 1842, £21 arrears of rent for the old workhouse was ordered to be paid to Mr. Hurley, which, presumably, is all the parochial assistance that gentleman obtained.

Requests to repair the fabric of the Church (17th August, 1843) met with the same fate. Again, 31st December, 1846, the Trustees allowed gas to be introduced into the Church, but refused parochial aid towards its cost. At this meeting it was decided to sell the "chandelier of the Church and the chain thereof."

This article was a feature of the old Church. It was "done up" by Messrs. Dyson and Benster (London), in 1814, at a cost of £113 15s. od. [The Trustees were unable to pay the bill for four years!] The Corporation of Rochester purchased it from Strood, and it did duty in the Guildhall for many years.

15th February, 1849. The Trustees sold four of the bells (cracked) of the Church for £79 18s. 1d. The final "kick over" by the parish of all cost or liability as regards Church expenses was in September, 1853, when the following document was served upon the Trustees.

*To the Trustees of the Poor of the Parish of Strood.*

Gentlemen—We beg to appeal against the following payments which have been made by you out of the Church Creditors' Rate, viz. :—

For the year 1851—For half-dozen wine, £1 7s. od.; Visitation fees, £1 8s. 10d.; Communion book, £1 2s. od.; Bread, 1s. 5½d.; Washing Surplices, 5s. od.; with sundry other items . . . . ., amounting to £21, and which were paid to the Churchwardens of Strood.

In respect to the year 1852.—For Coals, £2 15s. od.; Wax Candles, 10s. od.; The like and Sundries, 11s. 8d.; Half-dozen Wine, £1 8s. 11d.; Two Bottles Wine, 9s. 4d.; Washing Surplices, 15s. od.; with sundry other items amounting to £21. For Parish Clerk's Salary, £15; Repairing a Wheelbarrow, 10s. od.

In respect to the year 1853.—Kent Fire Office, Insurance of Church (one year), £5; Kent Mutual, the like, £4 10s. od.; New Lining and Repairing Church Doors, £9 5s. od.

We object to the foregoing that they are a misappropriation of the said rates. . . . . Also that no part of the said rates is payable to the said Churchwardens.

We are, Gentlemen, etc.,

EDWIN HORSNAILL,

7th September, 1853.

AUSTIN F. STACE.

The Trustees resolved to dismiss this appeal, which resolution was confirmed at the next meeting; a bill for the sum of £24 13s. 10d. similarly made up was also presented by the Churchwardens, but was held over for Counsel's opinion.

The opinion of Counsel was *unfavourable*, and it was ordered to be "entered on the minutes." It is not so posted.

Once more compromise came in. The Trustees gave an undertaking not to interfere with the governance of the Church in any way—[the Trustees formerly let the pews to the parishioners]—and the Vicar and Churchwardens pledged themselves to raise by subscriptions the necessary funds for decent celebration of Divine Service, and all attendant costs of keeping the fabric in repair. On this principle matters are still conducted; the Trustees administering the rate solely to discharge the obligations the Act of 1812 brought upon us.



March, 1859. Permission given to the Rev. Mr. Sheringham for alterations "at his own risk" to be carried out in the Church.\*

These alterations included (as far as the writer can trace) the present timber adornment of the ceiling, new windows, and the west entrance through the belfry into the Church; and in May, 1862, at a cost exceeding £300, the erection over the south door of the present organ. This instrument was decorated and repaired during the vicariate of Mr. Banning. In August, 1869, the Rev. Mr. Mayne proposed that new open benches in lieu of



INTERIOR OF NEW CHURCH, STROOD.

pews—one-half free sittings—be erected. It met with strong opposition, was hotly contested, and did not get carried until 15th June, 1871. The decoration of the east wall and Chancel, the Reredos, and the erection of the iron *chevaux de frise* east and west of the south entrance, were also carried out during Mr. Mayne's incumbency. The cost of these last-named improvements exceeded £1,000. The Bishop of the Diocese, on the completion of the work, reopened the building in August, 1860.

\* The appeal for subscriptions ran much as follows:—"The Rev. J. W. Sheringham, Vicar of Strood, earnestly solicits contributions towards the improvement of his unsightly Parish Church, built in the dark period of 1813!"

Owing to the growth of Strood, the Church Creditors' Rate has now dropped to 2d. in the £. This sum also allows of over £100 being annually paid off the principal.

If, at the completion of repayment, the cessation of the rate should cause the parish to lose the exceedingly useful powers of its local Act, Strood may well take pause before doing this.

The state of the parochial indebtedness as regards this liability at the present moment stands as follows—

All the Annuities have terminated.

There is now owing of the original £4,400 borrowed on the Mortgage of the Rates—

To Miss Joliffe .....	£1,400
To Miss Bruce .....	£700
	<hr/>
	£2,100

## CHAPTER VII.

### OUR PARISH REGISTERS.

“No history  
“We have left unrifled; our pens have been dipt  
“As well in opening each hid manuscript  
“As tracks more vulgar, whether read or *sung*,  
“In our domestic or more foreign tongue.”—

*Thomas Heywood.*

OUR earliest Parish Register begins as follows :

BURYALLS w<sup>thn</sup> the Parish of Strowde. Begun the xvi<sup>th</sup> day of Aprill, 1565.

Its first entry records that on that date “Margarett Corke was buryedd.” Following this are “Thos. Coll, Maryan Chireydon, Gylbart Chirydon, Dorothew Snoden, Edwarde Miles, Agnes Pile, Joane Larke, Joane Danyell, Roger Drinkway, Alis Nicolsonn, John Monde,\* Ellen Mixon, Margery Morris, Henry Taylor, John Smallwood, John Paine, Heughe Rawbow (?), Susan Adams, Amos Beste, Richard Burche, William Dennis, Anthony Chireydon, and Jillian Higgins.” These burials cover dates from the “vi<sup>th</sup> Maie to the xx<sup>th</sup> (?) Marche.” 1565-6.

There is a note at the end of this page which bids the searcher to “Look furthur for Baptizings for 1636 and 1637 in the latter end of this booke.”

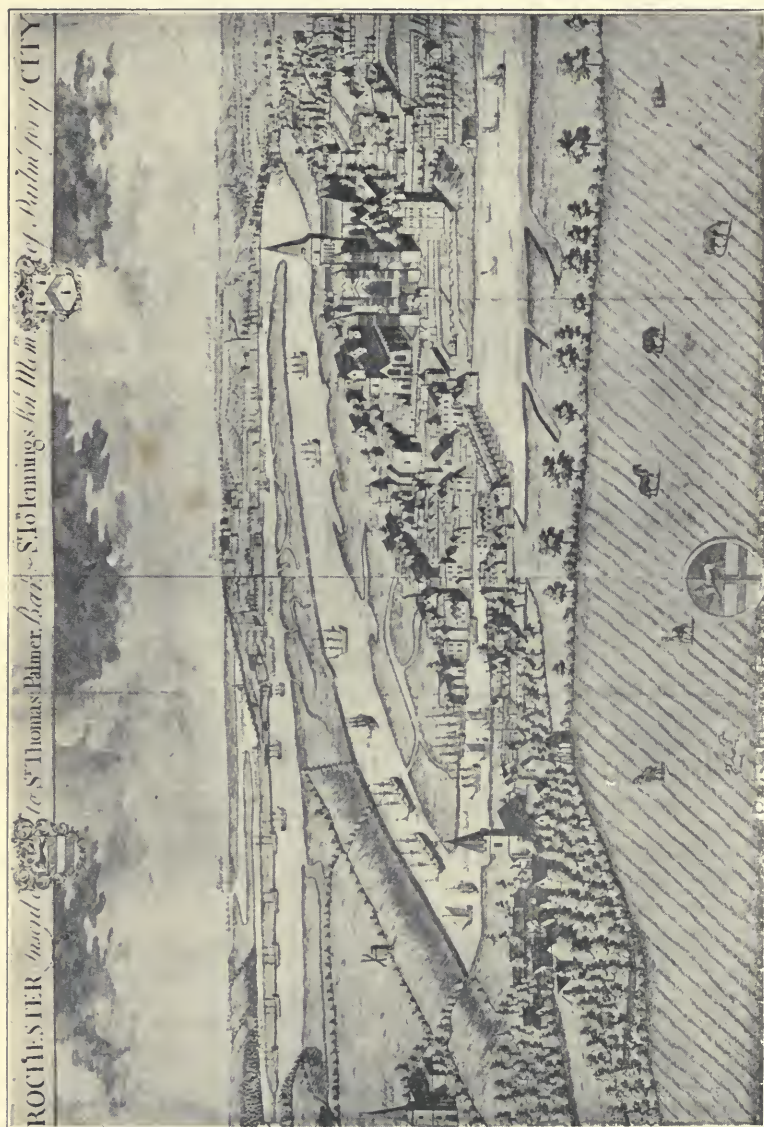
1566.—Thos. Brissenton buried the xvi. July.

1569.—Katheryn, a wooman y<sup>t</sup> lay at Squizzis, buried xxi<sup>st</sup> June.

Many Strood names still bearing their living representatives occur in this old book. Among others—“Hilles, Wicker, Wigger (?), Waddams, Olever, Ffryar, Cole, Hurlock, Clare, Goldoake, Robinson, Browne, Stephens, Tadman, Reade (Reede, Rede), Colleson, Branch, Bartholomew, Vigor, Normanton, Sueddall, Archbole (Archbolde), Haddams (Adams), Peare, Inggelsht (English ?), Hudson, Clarke, Patteson, etc.”

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\* See Altar Lights.



AN OLD SKETCH OF STROOD AND ROCHESTER.

From "History of Kent," 1719.

[Photographic Reproduction by Mr. J. J. Eastmead, Rochester.

Drawn by Dr. Harris.]

1572.—A bastard daughter of Olivere Fysher, the v<sup>th</sup> Ffebruary.

1573.—Alis, Mr. Cobham's\* maide, buried the xxvi. daie of August.

1576.—A poore walking man buried the xxvi. of October.

„ Raphe, a base walking wooma, the last daie of January.†

„ Alis Ffrogge was buried the last daie of Ffebruary.

1577.—Eliza Lynn was buried the xxx<sup>th</sup> daie of October.

„ Catherin Lynn was buried the viij<sup>th</sup> daie of November.

The Revd. James Lynn was Vicar of Strood in 1812, when our old Church was destroyed. Fra: Lynn also appears as one among three other signatories to an old deed (bond) in the possession of Mr. C. A. Cobb (see Morland). The document bears date April, 1702. Mrs. Lynn-Linton, the celebrated and veteran novelist, was a daughter of our old Vicar. She had no knowledge that any branch of her father's family anciently dwelt at Strood. Gadshill Place, which formerly belonged to the Rev. Mr. Lynn, was purchased by Charles Dickens, after the owner's death, from the executors, for £1,770.‡

1578.—Christian, a stranger, was buried the xvi<sup>th</sup> daie of June.

„ Rowland Ffilley was buried the xi<sup>th</sup> daie of Ffebruary.

1580.—Thomas Hills, Sail<sup>r</sup>, was buried the xxvii<sup>th</sup> daie of December.

1581.—Xposer Raynam was buried the viij<sup>th</sup> daie of Ffebruary.

1583.—Xposer Moore was buried the iij. daie of November.

1585.—Faithe Mathew was buried the xij. daie of July.

„ Henry John Botte, Sarvent, was buried the xxvi. daie of September.

„ Caleb Smythe, Stranger, was buried the xvi. daie of October.

1586.—Stephen Curde, of Dartford, was buried the vii. daie of January.

1587.—Price Aprice was buried the xij. daie of January.

1588.—John Seman, Sailer, was buried the xij. daie of Maye.

„ Jeromy Sutton, of St. Margoreis (Margaret's), was buried the iij. daie of September.

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\* Nearly 100 years after, John Cobham, of the "Cobham Arms," issued his token at Rochester.

† Old Style.

‡ *Woman at Home*, p. 344, January, 1896.



- 1591.—George Stevens, of Whitchapple, was buried the xv. daie of August.
- 1592.—Feaby Drewe was buried the xvi. daie of January.
- 1593.—Wydown Rawson was buried the xiiij. daie of March.
- „ Xpose Blomfield was buried the ix. daie of Junne.
- „ Canwicke? Wickers was buried the xix. daie of Junne.
- „ Tryethe Woolwridge was buried the xxii. daie of Junne.
- 1596.—Docker Pallmer was buried the xxvii. daie of October.
- „ Docker Robinson was buried the vi. daie of November.
- 1597.—Sister Childes was buried the xxiv. daie of August.
- 1598.—Nervell Godden, of Leyborn, was buried the iii. of September.
- 1600, and onwards.—William Shorland, Beteres Morley, Hew Austen, Armiyes Edwards, Gilbard Westlee, Thos. Ryghlle, George Cullet, William Weles, Gerard Coster, Rebecka Drawater, Robert Soves, Widdow Harpe, Elizabeth Dier, Elizander Saywell, Robert Bunche, Jone Homan.
- 1603.—Arkenstall's man buried the xx. December.

Forty-four burials—a high mortality for the period—are recorded in this year. The average runs about 12 to 15 per annum.

- 1604.—Griffon Smythe buried the xxviiij. January.
- 1605.—Ffollontine (Valentine) Morris buried the viii. September.
- 1607.—William Tadman's Childe buried the i January.
- 1609.—Elizabeth Allchin buried the firste Maii.
- „ Morgan, his wife and 2 children the same weeke, all of the pestilence.

This entry tells its own story. A number of different hand-writings have occurred. At this point the old style of dating ceases, and the present-day form begins, but reverts to the former style again later on. In this year, among others are recorded the burials of “Elizabeth Panelie, Lettis Geale, William Munn, his Wife allso, Nicolas Read, the Wife of Tunbar.”

- 1610.—A maid out of Richard Smith's howse, Ffather Ffinch, Edward Reason's Childe, and Too Sarvants of Waltar Ashes.
- 1611.—Allce Morlye, John Barefoote, John Haytar. “The Hemp dresser's Sonne,” buried the xxvii. daie of Januarie.

Entries for 1604-5 are all very beautifully written. Those succeeding are very scrawly, and apparently by an illiterate

person. After a hiatus of 5 to 6 years, we now revert to this former beautiful style of handwriting.

1612.—Ellis Cobb buried the xxiv. June.

„ A poore ould woman, who say<sup>d</sup> she dwelled at Horton, dyeing in the highe waye, wa<sup>s</sup> buried the vi<sup>th</sup> daie of August.

„ A Journeyman Shoomaker dyed at Coles, and was buried the xvij. August.

„ A Journeyman Shoomaker who died at Newman's, was buried the third of October. Thomas Coles and Mother Allchin were buried the third October.

„ Ffather King was buried the xxv. October.

„ Michaell, Goodman Newes' Servant, was buried the x. Ffebruary.

1613.—Goodwife Tumber, Ann Boorman, a Young Man that was drowne, Jarvis Cheesman, John Bratt of Sutton Valance, a Journeyman Baskett maker, a Man's Wife of Cliffe, Edward Olver his servant, Sister Nichollson.

„ A poore Man of London, who had xxxivs. of money about him, who so dyed, in his purse, and was buried here the xxi<sup>st</sup> September.

Here this finely executed handwriting again terminates. It was doubtless the work of the Revd. Jehokannan Maude.\* The entries following are the work of his successor, the Rev. Robert Chamberlayne.

1615.—Mrs. Elizabeth Wryotheshye, wife of John Wryotheshye (? Wryotteslye), buried the i<sup>th</sup> of Maye.

1616.—Thomasin Ellyve, Wyddow, November the 3<sup>th</sup>. (!)

„ Nychollas Barrows, Ffysherman, December the 4<sup>th</sup>.

1617.—Marye Nicholls, the Wife of Mr. Nicholls, Schoolmaster, buried the 16<sup>th</sup> Maye. Thomas, Son of Dioclesian Nicholas, Willyam a Stranger buried from the Bullocks, Elizabeth Standerd, a base-born; Christayon Daughter of John Bunce, Thomas Wyles.

1618.—John Nicholson of Hooe, Mathew Stephen (butcher), Stephen Byshopp an Orphant, Widdowe Gouge, Thomas Bolton (baker), Elizabeth Jelf.

1620.—Bryan Windbancke, a Sayler, September 15<sup>th</sup>.

„ William Bartholmew, Clarke of this Parrish, 26 October.

„ Sara Chamberlayne, Daughter of Mr. Robert Chamberlayne, Pastor of Stroud, Aprill the Second.

„ Susanna Shasted, a base-born of Gillyan Hywood.

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\* See Vicars of Stroud.

- 1622.—Mr. Peter Dutton, of Amsterdam, a Notary heere, Aprill 15th.  
 „ Thomas Ash (?) was brought from Rochester to be nursed heere at Richard Bennyth, October 7th.  
 „ Sarah *Purkisse*,\* Daughter of Henry Purkis, December 10th.  
 „ Alice Ffrench, Daughter of Richard Ffrench, of Leigh, in Essex, in the howse of Widow Stase, 25 daye of Aprill.  
 „ Thomas Pyper, a Sayler, 13 November. A Vagrant Girle, 8 December.
- 1624.—Agnes Wickham; One that was Servant to Thomas Griffyn; Michael Stace, daughter of Christopher (?); Agnes Austen, whoe did dwelle at Burling; A poore Mayde from Blackfordes; Walter Harbard, a Shipkeep from Wallerking (? Wakering); Danyell Woodward.
- 1625.—A heavy list this year. Among which are Willyam Ffurminger, A poore Sayler from Barlowes, Maximillyan Pollye, Ambrose Gaybard servant to Xposer Bath, Robert Newman, Clarke of this Parish; alsoe John Ffarlye, Servant to Robert Newman, deseased the 12 daye (Novr.); Rachell Juett filia Zacheris, and Hugh Arthur, a Welchman.
- 1626.—Thos. Dene the Gardener, Mrs. Johanna Chamberlayne, the Wife of Mr. Robert Chamberlayne, Pastor of Stroud, buried the 20 daie of Ffebruarie.  
 „ A Stranger died at the signe of the Shipp.
- 1627.—Elzth. Higgins, Widdowe and Midwife, Mathew Chamberlayne (Son of Vicar), Catherine Ponnett deseased this life alsoe, William Hatch, glover, and Dorothyie, the Wyfe of Fferdinando Wynpresse, Julye y<sup>e</sup> 19th.
- 1628.—Judith Rabbinnett, Wyfe of Mr. Thomas Rabbinnett, was buryed iu her Father's Vaut, the last daye of Aprill.  
 „ Widdowe Baker, of Stonehouse, and Ffrancis Larnoe the baker.  
 „ Mr. William Holt, Inkeeper at the Angell, 4 August. Willyam Stevens, the canmaker.
- 1629.—Dorcas, the Wife of Anthonye Hart, a poore traveller; Charles Grant, a carpenter; Gregorye Kennett, Goodman Hopswoodman, Christophe Bath, shoemaker; a Poore Trav Tyler out of Stroude Barne, 12 September; A Chrisine Childe of Edward Sampsons, A Poore Travayling Boye from Squires, Richard Smythe that belongeth to the Shippe.

This is Mr. Chamberlayne's last entry. As a Scribe, his successor is no better. Mr. Chamberlayne held office for 10 years longer, though another hand made the entries.

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\* Purkis is an old Strood name, one of the family being a watchmaker.

1630-31.—At this period there was evidently a fresh outbreak of the plague; how brought about the following entries, taken from a number may serve to show:

A Seaman who died in the house of John Dod, Clarke, buried the 12th Aprill. Ann Dod, Daughter of John Dod, Clarke, buried the 29th Aprill.

Richard Dod, the Sonne	John Dod,	} himselfe,	8th May.
Clarke, ..	.. buried		
John Dod, Clarke	.. „		

Among other families who likewise suffered were—

Easedowes (5), Stopwell (3), Pangbourne (6), and Squires (3).

The following is curious reading—

Thomas Chamberlain, Schoolmaster, Sonne of Mr. Robert Chamberlain, Pastor, and Repentance Sweeting, a stranger, who was by Gode providence deprived of his life at Rochester Bridge, both buried together the 9th October.

Alice Wynpresse, Anthony a childe that was noursed at Stroude, John Partridge who was drowned, and John Holloby, Churchwarden, the 6th Marche.

1632.—Margaret Noble, a poore wench that died in the Church-yard, the 29th December.

1635.—Sarah Chamberlain, Daughter (of Pastor's), 27 Aprill. Augustine Cooke, a cooke in one of His Majsty's Shippes. A Vagrant and his name not knowne.

1636.—Peter Baker, Taylour, 26 May. Mary, Wife of said Peter Baker, 28 May.

„ \*ROBERT YOUNG, *Churchwarden*, 30 July.

1637.—Thomas Archer the Younger, who died in Wapping and was buried heere near his father. William Bannister, who was drowned out of His Majesty's Ship, the Mary, buried here 3rd Obtober.

1638.—George Pitcher, Sonne of Gunner of the Anthelop, 23 July.

„ A Poore Traveller who died suddenly in John Paine's yard, 26 August.

„ Ann Shilmarden, 8th September. Also her Son Dionisius, buried in his mother's grave same daye. Philadelphia, her Daughter, 20 September.

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\* In all probability the senior partner in the Young and Pemble Charity. The name of Pemble also frequently occurs, but without mention of the Churchwardenship.

We now come to the last leaf of the burials in this book. It ends as follows :

BURIED.

1639.—MR. ROBERT CHAMBERLAINE, Pastour of Stroud, 1 June.  
 „ Robert, Sonne of William Gardener, as the mother reports,  
 June 4th.

FFINIS.

English of it is—

YE END OF BOOKE.

Anno 1639.

It should be noted—to the credit of some person—that these old books have been newly and strongly re-bound in leather a summary of the contents being printed on the covers.

REGISTER 1653—93.

The old Churchwardens' Account Book being lost, this Volume may be accounted the most interesting of all our Parochial records. It is an old leather bound tome with parchment leaves, and bears upon its covers, in faded ink, the following inscription—

“The Regester Booke for the Parrish of Strood, which cost Fiftheene Shillings, Bought in the yeere of our Lord God, 1653.”

Henery Figgett\* and William Bremster,  
 Churchwardens.”

And on the back cover—

“The Register Book or Book of Record of all such Publications of Mariges as have beene consented unto: Births of Childeren as have beene borne, and death of all Such Persons as have Dyed or have been buryed within the Parrish of Strood, in the Countye of Kent. Since the 29th Day of September, 1653.”

These records make fuller reference to such trades as were followed by the persons to whom the entries refer.

BIRTHS.

John Hodd, the Sonn of Christopher Hodd, còllermaker, 31 December, 1654.

Thomas Blunt, Sonn of Thomas Blunt, cordwinder, 30 March, 1655.


Ffrances Smith, the Daughter of Edward Smith, Polleymaker (pulley-block maker?), and Joane his Wife, 4 April, 1656.

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\* See Strood Tokens.



Elizabeth Ceasar, Daughter of Joseph Ceasar, the one and thirtieth day December, 1655, and baptis<sup>d</sup> the 7 January by Mr. Robert Ellis.

This old Strood family\* was one of importance, one member of it having been apothecary to Queen Elizabeth. The first reference to them is in 1606, when "Micheal Seasar (is) buried the xxvi day of September." Martin Ceasar was Churchwarden in 1608. The Ceasars occupied the house next Strood Post Office, formerly Mr. Humphrey Wickham's, now a furniture shop in the occupation of Mr. C. A. Cobb. Almost every entry touching this family has an indicating hand sketched opposite. 

The Wife of James *Man* was buried the 9th October, 1659.

Possibly a relative of our ejected Vicar.†

Here is a startling announcement—

JULIUS CEASAR, Sonne of Joseph . . . borne 15 Day December, 1657.

Immediately following occurs this note:—

Upon the 9 day Aprill I, John Lawton, entered upon the Register.

Evidently Mr. Lawton considered himself to be an important person. He has handed down the following interesting statement for the information of posterity—

Daniell Lawton, the Sonne of John Lawton and by Joane his Wife, betweene 7 and 8 of the clock at night, and in the yeere of ower lord god, Ano Dno. 166i, and baptized the 16 Aprill in the yeere next following.

It will be noted that though the Lawtons are duly dignified, as doubtless their qualities deserved, with initial capitals, this worthy Strood Bumble failed to extend the like consideration to the Deity.

*Register Paid* is a comforting announcement accompanying each record henceforth. It may be inferred that Mr. Lawton shared to some extent in these emoluments.

Tiberius, the Sonn of Joseph Ceasar and Mary his Wife, was borne the 12 March, 1662, and was baptised the 29 of the same month by Mr. Thomas Yardly, Mr. Hudson, the minister, being absent.

\* See Monuments in Old Church.

† See Vicars of Strood.

Clayes, the Daughtour of Jonhn tomson, pipe makour, was baptised the 3 day of May, in the yeare 1664.

Caroxollynus, the Sonne of Joseph Seesar and Mayrie his Wife, was borne the 16 day of May, in the year 1664, and baptised the 30th day of the same month.

BURIALS, 1663. Rather a fatal year.

John Bockerst, the Sonne of Petteor Bockerst, was buried in the year of our lord, 1664.

An, the Wife of Symon Jennings, was buried the ffifteenth of febbuarie.

1665.—Long list of deaths. Among others—Mistres Ffiggett desesed, and the Widdo Phiper.

1669.—Aprill 12, Xtopher, y<sup>e</sup> Sonn of Xtopher Venman,\* by Mary his Wife.

1677.—3 May, Alice, daughter of William and Mary Leafgreene.

In the year 1665 (the year of the Plague) no entry of burial gives either the day or month of death. From 1665 to 1671 the Parish Register suffered serious neglect. Leaves and portions of leaves are cut out, and scarcely any entries whatever are recorded.

There are reasons varied and curious to account for this neglect. The period these years cover mark a time of strong religious controversy.

Fox paints the martyrology of the Protestants under Mary's rule; DODD, in "The Church History of England," paints the martyrology of the Catholics by the Protestants during the reign of Elizabeth: HEVLIN champions the Church "by Act of Parliament established," describing those of opposite opinion as "sacriligious plunderers," etc.; whilst NEAL speaks of the same persons as "great and good men,"—their dissent was for reform.†

In October, 1645, the Book of Common Prayer was abolished and the "Directory" established. The provisions of this Ordinance enabled the congregation to control the minister, with the result that 2000 ministers were driven from their cures.‡

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\* See Tombs in Crypt.

† See *Disraeli's Curiosities of Literature*, Vol. iii., pp. 238—242.

‡ See Chapter viii., "Our Vicars."

It will be noted that from 1639 to 1653 no records of Births, Marriages, or Deaths exist for Strood. The following extracts from other Registers help us to an understanding, bearing also in mind the bitterness engendered by the earlier quarrels. On the Restoration, some Vicars were wicked enough to destroy all evidences of "the late unhappy troubles," etc. Others more wisely and justly contented themselves with protests, as witness the following :—

*From the Northborne Register.*

"Mem. : That I, James Burvill, Vicar of Northborne, was sequestered in An. Dom. 1655, and one Richard Lake, fiddler, placed there, who baptized no children. In June, 1660, the blessed year of the Most Gracious King Charles II<sup>nd</sup>, his happy Restoration I returned again out of Ireland, into the Parish of Northborne.—The Christenings there shall all be duly registered, witness my hand this 26th day of March, 1660.

J. Burvill, Vicar.

*Queenborough.*

"Whereas the Register Booke of this Towne hath heere-tofore beene in the hands of severall persons incapable of keeping the same by reason whereof divers persons who have been borne and buried within the said Towne have not been Registered to the great dishonour of this Towne and of those borne therein, it is hereby ordered that the said Register booke bee put into the hands of the Minister of this Towne for the time being or some other person capable of keeping the same, to be duly kept on penalty of 5s. a moneth for every other person who shall deteyn the same."—Queenborough. Proceedings in the Court Leet, 1660.\*

Premising that the Vicar of Bray annotated the Parochial Registers of his cure each time he underwent his theological metamorphoses, it must indeed provide interesting reading.

MARRIAGES—1653.

The Register of Marriages in this book are somewhat unusual, both in matter and form. It opens thus :—

"We whose names are hereunder appended, parrishioners of Strood, have made Choyce of George Parker to bee Register of the said Parish according to the late Act of Parliament. Witnesse our hande this one and twentieth Day of September in

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\* *Arch. Cant.*, Vol. 22, p. 180. See also *Mary Carleton*, Chap. 19.

the yeere of Our Lord god one thousand six hundred fifty and three.

C. Morland,	Isaac Blake,*	Joseph Ceasar,
Richard Barkenstall,	George Maplesden,	Thomas boot,
John Lathbury,	Henry figgett,	Philemon Ewver,
William Parkinson,	Ambrose hakensell,(?)	The mark of E N Edward Norwood.
† John Lacey,	John Cart,	Isaac Carter.

Peter Bucke, a Justice of the Peace for the County, signs the sworn declaration of George Parker, confirming this appointment.

It should be noted that all records from 1653 to 1693 (about) are in one book. The volume is simply turned upside down and begins from both ends.

Its first announcement under the above introduction is as follows:—

#### MARRIAGES—Anno Dommy. 1653.

“The consent of Matriniony between John Cart, the Sonne of Thomas Cart, of Strood, in the Countye of Kent, wheelwright, and Ann Merriman, Widdow, the late wife of Thomas Merriman, late of Strood, Miller Decased, was published the first tyme in the publicke meeting place, commonly called the Church or Chapell of Strood, aforesaid, upon Sunday, the 16 October, 1653 Anno Dommy.”

After occurring three times, this announcement winds up as follows:—

“The abovesaid John Cart and Ann Merriman being published three sevrell Lord’s Days as abovesaid, in accordance with the Act of Parliament in that case made and provided. Charles Bowles, Esq., one of the justices of the Peace† in the said Countye, did marry the abovesaid John Cart and Ann

\* 3 Jan. 31, Charles II.† Isaac Blake, of Strood, gent., and Elizabeth, his wife, John Blake, citizen and skinner of London, and Hannah, his wife, parties, conveyed several pieces of property in Halstow, Cliff, and Hoo, to Lionel Richardson, who had married a daughter of Mary Somer.—Streathfield MSS., British Museum.

Original Deed in possession of L.B.L.

† 3 Jan. 31, Charles II.—To many, this reads enigmatically. Charles I. was executed 30 January, 1649, and the Commonwealth established. On the restoration of Charles II., 8 May, 1660, all legal documents dated from 1649, the eleven years of the Commonwealth being ignored. Most persons, however, are disposed to regard its period of rule as a striking fact in English history.

‡ The Act whereby Justices were called upon to perform the marriage ceremony was passed this same year (1653). *Banns* are said to have been introduced into the Church A.D. 1200.

Merryman in the presents(?) of those witnesses whose names are hereunder subscribed, the one and thirtieth day of October, 1653."

Charles Bowles.

John ffinning, John Kenner.

All entries follow in this form.

We have record of the marriages of "Peter Maior (Major), of the States Ship Mathias," and "Elizabeth Shinnings of Maidstone." Charles Bowles, as before, performing the ceremony, which was witnessed by Henry Allan, of the Bull's Head.

4 July, 1654.—George Birtch, of Penzance, in the Countye of Cornwall, "married ffrancis (?), daughter of John Chambers, of Strood, and he who tied the knot was GEORGE ROBINSON." Robert Spurrell of the States Shipp "Crow," follows. The trades of the various benedicts are generally given during this period. Here are some of them, viz.:—Ffysberman, Mariner, Hempdresser, Locksmith, Bricklayer, Butcher, Joyner, Collemaker, Drapour, Saylmaker, etc.

16 July, 1655.—"Henry Baventon, a Souldier, under the command of Captaine John herdyeeere, and Alce Mitle, spinster, of Strood." Her father, Richard, is described as a "Woollen Drapper."

George Robinson, "Maior of Rochester," united the above couple. His Worship, as does his present Strood namesake, wrote a nice clear hand.

16 January, 1656.—Jeremy Jagoe, of Cornewall, a souldier under command of Captain Smith, married Elzth. Stoeke, of Chatham.

3 February, 1656.—John Mayes, "a boatswayne's mate of the States Shipp the Andrew" had his banns—in alliance with "Elizth Jackson"—thrice published, but the ceremony does not take place. Whether John was fickle, or the State suddenly needed his services elsewhere, we do not know.

18 February, 1656.—"Samuel Ffrench (see Vicars of Strood), sonne of Daniell, of Strood, Clarke, and Elizabeth Castleden, in the Cittie of Rochester," were the last couple married by our much-in-evidence friend George Robinson.

We find also published "the consent" of matrimony between "John tompson of Strood," "tobacko pipe maker," and



Margaret Springfield, a "widdow." It did not get beyond this stage.

In excavating the storm water drainage through the Institute Garden a great quantity of tobacco pipes of this period were discovered. Very probably "John tompson" (see 3rd May, 1664) might have carried on his pipe-making industry at that spot.

We now revert to the old order. Marriages were again the work of the Church, "Master Daniell French" now performing these functions.

1661-2.—During these years only *one* marriage is recorded. That is given in faded ink and written by a strange hand. Mr. French was ejected in 1662.

In 1663 the marriages reach the total of *six*, all being carried out by a "Mr. Hudson, of Rochester," who had, occasionally, performed the like offices before. Mr. Hudson's writing is an improvement upon Mr. French's. Whether as a parson and a man he so exceeded our ejected vicar is another matter.

Another hiatus! Only *one* marriage from 1664 to 1676! Whatever else the Restoration effected it did not restore order here.

17 April, 1677.—"John Stowel, gent, of Rochester, and Frances Moreland" are the next couple; after 11 other entries the handwriting changes again—for the worse.

"Humphrey Williams, curate," marries the next pair, viz. "George London, of Graine, and Elizth Simmonds, of Stoke," the next vicar so officiating being "Fferdinando Booth."

23 December, 1679.—Samuel Gibson, vicar of Stoke, was married to Precilla Booth, of Strood.

15 January, 1683.—Peter Cowling and Elizth Dunning.

17 September, 1683.—Buried, Sarah, daughter of James and Anna Goter(?)—probably Gother, the family who then owned the private chapel.

1678.—20 February, Captain Cuntrey. Here we have the first affidavits as to being buried in "woollen."\*

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\* See Trade Tokens.

9 December, 1678.—Catherine, daughter of Christopher Venman.\*

28 March, 1679.—Mary, Wife of above—buried “in linen.”

#### CHRISTONED.

1686.—3 April, Richard, ye Sonn of James Gother.

1688.—Mary, daughter of Samuel Gibson, Vicar of Frindsbury.

1693.—Stephen, y<sup>e</sup> Sonn of Stephen Hulkes.

1694.—22 August, Samuel, y<sup>e</sup> Sonn of Stephen Thornton, Rector of Luddesdon.

#### MARRIAGES.

17 April, 1690.—Edward Batten, of Rochester (ancestor of Sapsea?) and Margar Groombridge, of Strood.

14 October.—Y<sup>e</sup> Reverend George Thorpe, Dr. of Devinity, and Preb. of Canterbury, and Martha Diggs, gentlewoman, of Canterbury.

13 April, 1693.—Stephen Thornton, Minister of Luddesdon, and Mary Booth, of Strood.

Here the entries finish.

#### REGISTERS: 1696—1714.

This book is also newly bound. The following entries are selected from its contents.

#### BURIALS.

1696.—July 15, Francis Symonds, a soldier from y<sup>e</sup> Angel.

„ September 19th, Thomas Cash, a stranger from y<sup>e</sup> house of John Clinch.

„ October 8, A bastard child born in y<sup>e</sup> street.

„ November 24, Thomas Eves, from y<sup>e</sup> King's Head.†

1697.—January 20, Cap<sup>n</sup> James Gother.‡

„ January 27, Will Stephens, a Soldier from Richard Barber.

„ March 11, John Melshem, servant at y<sup>e</sup> Angel.

„ March 17, John Sporgen, found killed in y<sup>e</sup> highway.

„ June 15, Val Thompson, a Sayler from Clinches.

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\* See Gravestones in Crypt.

† Strood Conservative Club occupies the site of this old Inn.

‡ Ancient Owners of the Private Chapel.

- 1697.—July 8, A child brought from on board y<sup>e</sup> Albermarle.  
 „ August 21, Synnson, a Soldier from Willson's.  
 1698.—August 27, John Linesborne and William Langley, two Soldiers y<sup>t</sup> killed each other in a Duell.  
 1699.—March 22, Mary Griffen, a poore woman from y<sup>e</sup> Alehouse called y<sup>e</sup> 3 Merry Boys.\*  
 „ April 23, Ceasar, y<sup>e</sup> son of Stephen Simmonds, Master Gunner of His Majesty's Ship Britannia.  
 „ September 21, Richard Lovelace, of His Majesty's Ship y<sup>e</sup> Duchess.  
 1702.—June 1st, Eliz. Watson, from Mrs Woods' house by y<sup>e</sup> waterside.  
 „ July 5, A poore traveller's child, whose name I knew not.  
 „ July 28, Israel Hatt, a tinman.  
 „ September 10, Barnabas, y<sup>e</sup> son of John Wallsall, an attorney.  
 1703.—March 1st, Bury'd, a waygoer, whose name I could not finde oute.  
 „ May 21, John Atkinson, a stranger from y<sup>e</sup> Gun.  
 1704.—April 23, James Armstrong, a Soldier from y<sup>e</sup> sign of y<sup>e</sup> Saddler's Arms.  
 „ August 6th, James Almond, a Soldier from y<sup>e</sup> Pipes.  
 „ August (?), Mary, y<sup>e</sup> wife of Willam Slaughter, an attorney, mother of y<sup>e</sup> wife of Sir Walter Roberts, of Glastonbury.†  
 1705.—August 31, Dorothy Green, from y<sup>e</sup> Fountain.  
 1710.—May 25, Mary, daughter of John Gibbs, a butcher.‡

## CHRISTENINGS.

- 1714.—George, y<sup>e</sup> son of George Smith, Minister of Higham.

## MARRIAGES.

- 1703.—January 21, Bartholomew Stanstropp and Johanna PEPYS, both of Chatham.

This, in all probability, refers to a relative or collateral descendant of the immortal diarist.

## REGISTERS: 1715—1789.

The Revd. Caleb Parfect was appointed Vicar of Strood four years after the commencement of this book. His individuality

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\* See Strood Inns.

† See Monument North-west corner of Church.—Glaserbury, near Cranbrook.

‡ In all probability a forefather of the later John Gibbs, his immediate ancestors appearing to have followed this occupation.

is strongly expressed in its pages. On the inner cover are the following memoranda, which tell their own story.

“Beware of acquiescing in the agreements of your Predecessor. This caution will prevent the growth of Modus’s\* and preserve the Revenues of the Church.

“June 8th, 1726.

“C. PERFECT.”

“September 9th, 1726.—Mem.: That I y<sup>s</sup> year took Mr. Pilcher’s Hops in kind, growing in a garden on Spittle Hill, at the hither end of w<sup>ch</sup> is a Lime-kiln; and that there was no Dispute about the manner of my thus taking the tenth, or the method of tithing; but that I received the tenth Bushel without any manner of Controversy.

“This is minuted here, and attested for the Benefit of Him who may succeed in this Curacy (in case a modus should ever be pretended on Hops) by me,

“CALEB PERFECT.”

“The truth of this is likewise attested by me (who Dry’d the said Hops for Mr. Perfect).

“And also by me (the King’s Officer who weighed and received the King’s duty of Mr. Perfect for y<sup>e</sup> said Tithe Hops).”

Whether Mr. Perfect counted without his host we do not know, but the gentleman who “Dry’d the said Hops” failed to set his sign manual to the above statement, as did also the King’s Officer.

Possibly our worthy Vicar may have taken a position from which he afterwards found it prudent to retreat.

The next entry, though anterior in date, follows the above :

“December 16th, 1724.—Mem.: That I took Nuns milk in kind carried to the *Church Porch* in the year 1722. Several of the Parishioners can witness this: particularly one Bridget Dye, y<sup>t</sup> was our Servant. Nun lived in the Farm by the Church Yard Gate, now occupied by one Smith, a maltster. The keeping up of this custom is of great service in making compositions for milk; especially with those Farmers y<sup>t</sup> live at a considerable Distance from the Church.

“CALEB PERFECT.”

“November 19th, 1726.—Mem.: That on y<sup>e</sup> 6th Instant, I left of Preaching Sunday mornings, and began my Catechetical Exercises. I catechised the Children before, sometimes on

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\* Compositions in lieu of Tithes.

Sundays in the afternoon, and sometimes on Prayer Days and H. Days; but finding many Inconveniencies attending both these methods, I at last resolved to Drop y<sup>e</sup> morning Sermon (as the Congregation is then much thinner) and to apply myself constantly to y<sup>t</sup> most useful Part of the Pastoral Office; w<sup>ch</sup> I accordingly began on the said 6th November, 1726.

“C. PERFECT.”

The next record is significant.

“Upon application made by Mr. Robert Beresford to bury Mrs. Medhurst in the Church, I sent him the following note:—

“Mr. Beresford,

February 17th, 1728-9.

“If you can bring me a certificate, or give me Due Satisfaction of your being married to Mrs. Medhurst, you shall be very welcome to have a Grave for her in the Church; otherwise you must expect no such thing. I cannot but think your conduct (in case you were not married) very surprising and without Doubt be shocking and very offensive to all Sober and considerate Xtians, as well as to yours,

“C. PERFECT.

“His answer to this was that he was not married, and So I refus'd him a grave in the Church, having liv'd with this woman after an indecent manner. If the Minister's Right in this point should be ever contested, this Instance may be of some Service, as it shows that no Body else pretended to it, the person being bury'd in the Church-Yard.”\*

There are other notes in this book; succeeding Vicars having taken Mr. Perfect's hints anent establishing evidence.

The next is both interesting and instructive.

“One of the Churchwardens erected a pair of Stocks in the Church Yard without my leave or knowledge.

“I presently sent orders to have them removed. It was promised they should be removed, but Delays were invented; Nay it was said by one of the Overseers (Mr. Coosens) that they should stand there for all me. I therefore applied to the Arch-Deacon, who gave orders to remove them, which was accordingly done.

“November 14th, 1735.

C. BEEKE.”

One can but be in entire sympathy with Mr. Beeke in his resolve that the Churchyard was not a fitting place to erect Stocks.

Many burials took place in the old Church, for which fees of

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\* The tomb of the Beresfords faces the Belfrey door.



218. were duly noted. The following entries are all that are of special interest to be found in this Book.

## BAPTISMS.

22 July, 1723.—John, Son of Caleb and Bennet Parfect.

13 January, 1748.—John, Son of John and Sarah Gunston\* bapt<sup>d</sup>,

12 March, 1748.—William Strood, a foundling child.

## MARRIAGES.

1729—August 10, Henry Redhead and Sarah Halfnight, both of Sheerness.

1731.—Richard Kee (of All Saints, London), to Elizth. Elvey, of Strood.

## BURIALS.

1718.—February 16, A waygoer's child from y<sup>e</sup> Wid. Godfrey (parish).

1724.—February 16, Samuel Gibson, Vicar of Frindsbury.

1727.—November 2nd, Bennet Parfect, Infant.

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\* See Gunston Monument in Church—North Wall.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### OUR VICARS.

“ A good man then was of religioun,  
That was a poure parson of a toun;  
But riche he was of holy thought, and werk,  
He was also a lerned man, a clerk,  
That Christes gospel treuely wolde preche;  
His parishens devoutly wolde he teche:”

*Chaucer.*

STROOD is indebted to the Rev. C. H. Banning for the thoughtful service he rendered when a list of its Vicars was painted upon the walls of the belfry arch—though it is incomplete. The masters of Newark Hospital were also Vicars of Strood. Their names appear at the head of Chapter ix.

Hasted's list\* of Vicars of Strood, commences with Richard Jackson, 1501.† We then have a blank extending to 1630, when Robert Chamberlain is given.‡

The Parish Registers have enabled the writer to add to this list:—

ROBERT STOCKTON,

Vicar of Strowde, buried the xvith daie of September,  
1575.

JEHOKANNAN MAWDE,

Minister of Stroud, was buried the 25 September, 1615.

[Mr. Mawde was the most accomplished penman that had any part in making entries in these books.]

ROBERT CHAMBERLAYNE.

Entries by this gentleman immediately follow the death of Mr. Mawde. The days of this Vicar were long in the land of Strood. We leave him thus:—

1639. Buried.

MR. ROBERT CHAMBERLAINE, pastour of Stroud, the 1st of June.

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\* Vol. III., 8vo., p. 559.

† *Reg. Roff.*, p. 416.

‡ *MSS. Twysden.*

JOHN MAN succeeded Mr. Chamberlain.

That John was a robust Royalist, the following drastic edict is good evidence. Some discomfoting doubts as to the falsity of the other moral failings urged against him, may be excused, though it is well to remember that "Alehouses and Taverns" were the common meeting places for gentle and simple alike in his day, and beer was almost as much a national beverage as tea is to-day.

"The Stipend and Benefice of *John Man*, curate of the Parish Church of Stroode, neere *Rochester*, in the county of Kent, is sequestered, for that he is a common drunkard and frequenter of Alehouses and Taverns, drawing others to the same excesse with him, and is a common swearer by bloudy oathes, and useth to curse, and is a common quarreller and fighter, and said

"*That he scorned the Parliament, and that the Parliament-men were not Gentlemen of quality, and hath expressed great malignity against the Parliament.*"\*

Judging by the italicised sentences, and the additional fact that in all these "sequestrations," speaking against "the Parliament-men" is evidently regarded as the crowning iniquity—it was for this offence, chiefly, that John lost his benefice. What afterwards happened to our outspoken Vicar we do not know. He was succeeded by

DANIEL FRENCH.

"A very pious man," who, apparently, was vicar during the Commonwealth. He was the son of Samuel French, of Town Mallings. Our Mr. French was ejected for Nonconformity in 1662. His father, for the like cause, was also ejected from his living at Town Mallings.

SAMUEL HUNT (?)

No record is on hand as to this Vicar, or "lecturer," as the case may be, but concerning him the Register contains the following entry:—

"Thos. Cripps, the sonne of James Cripps and Ann, his wife, was borne the 7 day of May, 1662, and baptized the 29 of the same month by Mr. Thomas Johnson, Minister of Frindsbury, Mr. Hunt, the *Minister of Strood*, being absent."

As Mr. Hunt officiated in baptizing "Titus, the sonn of Joseph Ceasar and Mary, his wife, on the 14th of Ffebruary,

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\* From the *First Century of Scandalous and Malignant Priests*.—1643.

1661," he *may* have been merely appointed during the period Mr. French was under trial and process of ejection.

In one instance only a

MR. HUDSON

Is also mentioned in 1662 as being "Minister."

WILLIAM SCOTT, about 1670,

Was also rector of Northfleet. Nothing can be stated of this Vicar beyond the fact that he discharged his duties—as far as the registers are concerned—with the greatest laxity; and was either too idle or too ignorant (hardly the latter) to make any entries of the parochial functions he performed.

"FERDINAND BOOTH.

"Obiit, Feby. 24th, 1679." Thus Hasted, who also adds that "He lies buried in this Church." Thorpe's *Reg. Roffense* gives the date of this vicar's death as Feby. 4th, 1679, in his copy of the wording of the Booth Monument formerly existent in our old Church. The Parish Register is as follows:—"1679, February 10th, was bury'd Ferdinand Booth, Vicar of Hoo. Precilla, his wife, made aff John Cobham." The inscription in Thorpe speaks of him as the "*late* Minister of the parish." He died at the early age of 35 years.

Ferdinand Booth was the Son of Ferdinando Booth, gentleman, of Dover, one of the suspected persons under the surveillance of Parliament in 1656 (see *Arch. Cant.*, Vol. XXIII.). Matriculated at Christ Church, Oxon., 18 July, 1662, aged 17; B.A. Magdalen Coll., Cambridge, 1663; Vicar of Hoo (*alias* St. Warburgh), 1675.

JAMES AXE, A.M.

1685-88. Was a pluralist, being also Vicar of Stockbury. There are no parochial records of this gentleman.

Son of James Axe, of Farnham, Surrey. Matriculated at Christ Church, Oxon., 27 September, 1667, aged 19; B.A., 1671; Clerk of Magdalen Coll., 1671-80; M.A., 1674; Vicar of Stockbury, 1711.

JOHN HARRIS, D.D.,\* whose portrait and autograph—facsimile—here appears, is the most famous man in our list of Vicars.

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\*In gathering his material for the *History of Kent*, Dr. Harris "unfortunately" let the valuable Textus Roffensis belonging to the Dean and Chapter of Rochester, fall into the Thames. It was, by the happiest fate, rescued, but little the worse for its immersion.—p. 45, *History of Rochester*. W. T. Wildish, 1890.

John Harris, D.D., born about 1667, probably in Shropshire; educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, where he proceeded B.A. in 1687, and commenced M.A. in 1691. After taking orders he was presented to the vicarage of Icklesham, Sussex. On 7th September, 1690, he entered on the cure of Winchelsea, and on 14th February, 1690-1, was inducted into the rectory of St. Thomas, Winchelsea. He was installed a prebend in Rochester Cathedral 6th February, 1708, and was presented to the united parishes of St. Mildred, Bread Street, and St. Margaret Moses, London. He also held the perpetual curacy of Strood, Kent, to which he was appointed in right of his prebendal stall, 29th August, 1711, and he was presented to the rectory of East Barming, Kent, in 1715.

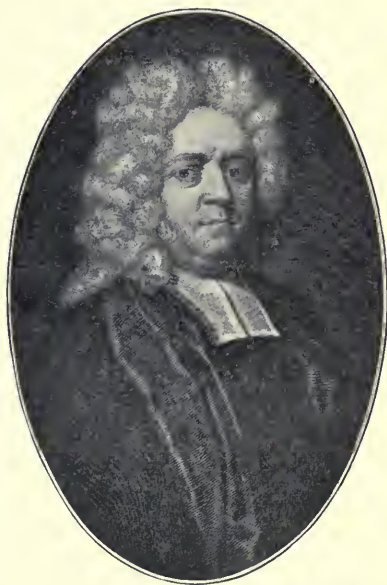
At an early age his studies took a scientific turn, and 29th April, 1696, he was elected a fellow of the Royal Society. Two years later he preached the Boyle Lectures [in St. Paul's Cathedral]. His subject was "The Atheistical Objections against

the Being of God, and his Attributes, fairly considered and fully

refuted." These Lectures were afterwards published.

In 1699 he took the degree of B.D. at Cambridge, and obtained the Lambeth degree

of D.D. on 10th July, 1706. About 1698 he began to read free public lectures on mathematics at the Marine Coffee House in Birchin Lane. These lectures had been instituted "for the public good" by Mr. (afterwards Sir) Charles Cox, M.P. Harris was still engaged in delivering these lectures in 1702 and 1704; and in the former year he taught all kinds of mathematics at his



[Engraved by Virtue.

JOHN HARRIS, D.D.,  
From "History of Kent," 1719.

*John Harris*



house in Amen Corner, "where any person might be either boarded or taught by the month." In 1706 he was a member of the Council of the Royal Society, and on 30th November, 1709, was elected Secretary, but only served one year. He was employed by the London booksellers to compile a "Collection of Voyages and Travels," which was afterwards improved by Dr. John Campbell; and he likewise, at their suggestion, prepared the first English "Dictionary of Arts and Sciences," from which more recent cyclopædias take their origin. In 1712 he began to make collections for a "History of Kent," of which one volume—of little value—was published shortly after his death.

Harris was culpably improvident, and was generally in distress. He died 7th September, 1719, an absolute pauper, at Norton Court, Kent, and was buried in Norton Church at the expense of John Godfrey, Esq., who had long been his friend and benefactor.

His works are:—

1.—"Remarks on some late Papers relating to the Universal Deluge, and to the Natural History of the Earth," London, 1697, 8vo, an able defence of the system of Dr. Woodward against the attacks of Dr. Martin Lister and others.

2.—"The Atheistical Objections, &c.," already mentioned.

3.—"Short but yet plain Elements of Geometry and Plain Trigonometry," 1701, from the French of Ignace Gaston Pardies.

4.—"The Description and Uses of the Celestial and Terrestrial Globes," and of "Collins' Pocket Quadrant." London, 1703, 8vo.

5.—"Lexicon Technicum; or an Universal English Dictionary of Arts and Sciences," explaining not only the terms of Art, but the Arts themselves; 1 vol., London, 1704; 2nd edition, 2 vols., 1708-10. The first volume was dedicated to Prince George of Denmark, and the second to Lord Chancellor Cowper. A supplement, "by a society of gentlemen" appeared at London, 1744, fol.

6.—"Navigantium atque Itinerantium Bibliotheca: or a compleat collection of Voyages and Travels, consisting of above four hundred of the most authentick writers"; 2 vols., London, 1705, fol. Another edition, revised, with large additions, by Dr. John Campbell, 2 vols., 1744-8, fol., and again, 2 vols., 1764, fol.

7.—“The London Merchant’s Mirror, or the Tradesman’s Guide, being Tables for the ready casting up Bills of Exchange,” London, 1705, a small sheet composed and engraved by Harris.

8.—“The British Hero; or a discourse shewing that it is the interest, as well as duty, of every Briton to avow his loyalty to King George on the present important crisis of affairs,” a sermon, London, 1715, 8vo.

9.—“The Wickedness of the Pretence of Treason and Rebellion, for God’s sake,” a sermon; London, 1715, 8vo.

10.—“Astronomical Dialogues between a Gentleman and a Lady: wherein the Doctrine of the Sphere, uses of the Globes, and the elements of Astronomy and Geography are explained. With a description of the Arrery.” London, 1719, 8vo. 2nd and 3rd editions, corrected by J. Gordon, 1729 and 1766.

11.—“The History of Kent,” in five parts, vol. 1 (all published), London, 1719, fol. This work is extremely inaccurate. Thirty-six of the plates of the seats and towns were afterwards published separately. Some of the plates were engraved by Harris himself. Harris’s MS. collections passed, after the death of his friend John Godfrey, into the hands of Edward Goddard, Esq., of Clyffe Pypard, Wiltshire, who possessed them in 1761, but Hasted, the historian of Kent, was unable to recover them.

His portrait, engraved by G. White, from a painting by B. White, is prefixed to the “Lexicon Technicum”; and another, engraved by Virtue, from a painting by A. Russel, appears in the “History of Kent.”—(*From the Dictionary of National Biography.*)

CALEB PERFECT, A.M.

1719-1733. (See parish Registers.) Emmanuel Coll., Cambridge. Ordained 1710 by Wm. Talbot, Bishop of Oxford. Took Priest’s orders 1715, from Richard Willis, Bishop of Gloucester. Became rector of Cuxton 1719, also minor Canon of Rochester and Vicar of Strood. Married 30th March, 1722, Bennet Walsall. She died, and was buried in Strood Church, 27th March, 1727. Mr. Perfect married again 29th December, 1730, Bridget Pooley, of St. Nicholas, Rochester. In 1733 he resigned Strood and his minor Canonry and became Vicar of Shorne. He retained these two livings until his death in September, 1770. Mr. Perfect lies buried in the Lady Chapel of

Cuxton Church, where his widow, after surviving him until the 2nd December, 1775, was also interred.

About 30 years ago the altar tomb which covered their remains was—during the restoration of Cuxton Church—removed to the south side of the churchyard. Exposure to the weather has, unfortunately, rendered its rather redundant inscriptions almost illegible. Like Shakespeare, our old Vicar bequeaths his execrations upon any person who should “disturb his bones.” Presuming that the virtue of this curse extends to the removal of his tomb, the shade of the late rector (Mr. Shaw) must bear this responsibility.

The Cuxton Registers have voluminous records of Mr. Parfect’s personality. Upon all questions of the tithe our vicar was as unswerving as Mr. Jorkins. At Cuxton he fought, and won, in this cause, a legal battle with the Lord Darnley of that day. He commemorates his victory with a Latin quotation, which, interpreted, stands thus :

“With benignant providence Jupiter defends us,  
And to his name be the glory given.”—February 1st, 1765.

The Rev. Caleb, while vicar of Strood, inhabited a house, the site of which is now included in the Strood (N.A.) Union premises.

Strood Belfry Arch has upon it the names of CHARLES PARFECT and ——— CHAPMAN, 1720. They were possibly curates to Caleb. Vicars they certainly were not.

Caleb Parfect, Son of John D., of Farnborough, Somerset. Matriculated Balliol Coll., 3 April, 1707, aged 21; B.A., 1710; M.A., Emanuel Coll., Cambridge, 1725. Father of John P., who matriculated 8 April, 1742, at Oriel Coll., aged 17; B.A., 1745; M.A., 1748; B.D., 1764.

CHRISTOPHER BEEKE, M.A.

1733-36. St. John’s College, Cambridge. Under master Grammar School, Rochester; Vicar of Strood and Stockbury. Died 10th February, 1798, aged 89. Mr. Beeke wrote a beautifully clear hand.

Christopher Beeke, of Kingsteignton, Devon. His Son Henry matriculated at Corpus Christi Coll., Oxon., 6 May, 1769, aged 18; B.A., 1773; Fellow Oriel, 1775; M.A., 1776; B.D., 1785; D.D., 1800; Vicar of St. Mary the Virgin, Oxford, 1782; Proctor,

1784; Rector Ufton Norcot, Berks, 1789; Regius Professor of Modern History, 1801-3; Dean of Bristol, 1814; Vicar of Weare, Devon; died 9 March, 1837. A celebrated financial critic and writer.

Richard, Son of Christopher, matriculated Oriel Coll., 8 December, 1770, aged 17.

RICHARD HUSBAND, M.A.

1738-47. Christ Church, Oxon. Deacon (Litchfield), 1719. Priest (Canterbury) 1721. Buried in Rochester Cathedral, 26th May, 1769.

EDWARD BEADON.

Son of Richard Beadon, of Oakeford, Oxon. Matriculated Balliol Coll., 25 November, 1723, aged 17; B.A., 1727.

[A Rev. Fredk. Beadon, Son of Edward B., of Lincoln's Inn Fields, was Rector N. Stoneham, 1811-79.]

JOHN WARD ALLAN.

6th January, 1791. Son of Matthew Allan, of Windsor, Berks., Gent. Matriculated Pembroke Coll., 14 July, 1760, aged 18; B.A., 1764; M.A., 1767. Died 14 December, 1801; buried in Rochester Cathedral.

Judging from a pamphlet bearing the following title, viz:—"Sermon preached 6th May, 1787, before the Mayor and Corporation of the City of Rochester, at the Parish Church of Strood, by the Rev. J. Ward Allen, M.A., Minor Canon of Rochester and Curate of Strood," 8vo (for the benefit of the Humane Society), Mr. Allen must have been a very capable man. It was published at "Rochester: W. Gilman; and may be had at Messrs. Rivington's, St. Paul's Churchyard, London." It is dedicated to "Thos. Stevens, Esq., Mayor, and the other Members of the Corporation," and was "preached and published at their particular request," June 7th, 1787.

St. Luke, chap. x, latter part of verse 37—

"Then said Jesus unto him, go and do thou likewise."

On the above text the reverend gentleman preached a really good, broad, and high-minded sermon, that entitles it to the greatest respect, and also merited the compliment paid him by the Corporation when they "particularly" requested it to be published. As might be expected it is fairly lengthy (26 pages), and the quaintest feature of the matter is the fact that attached



to it are 33 pages of observations and rules for the recovery of persons apparently drowned: for the avoidance of premature interment, etc.; also for the treatment for "appoplexies, trances, syncope and fits, convulsions of young children, malignant and nervous fevers, small pox, etc." Many of the recommendations are no doubt sensible enough, and others there are well calculated to raise a smile when read in the light of to-day's advanced knowledge. A dozen cases of recovery, more or less remarkable, are instanced, all of great interest. This is followed by a table of rewards paid by the Society for the saving of life, among which scale a fee of a guinea is announced to be paid to publicans "who receive the bodies readily into their houses," and on page 45 we learn that "on Wednesday, May 30th, 1787, Messrs. Barrow, Weeks and Bromley, of Strood; Dr. Bengo, Messrs. Dyne, Blackstone, Robinson, and Cooper, of Rochester, were unanimously elected medical assistants."

This goes to prove that the Rev. Mr. Allen's sermon was productive of some effect.

JOHN GRIFFITHS, D.D.

1801-3. Fellow of Queen's College, Oxon. Son of John Griffiths, of Rodmill, Sussex, Clerk. Matriculated Wadham Coll., 15 April, 1791, aged 18; B.A., 1794; M.A., 1797; D.D., 1821. Many years Master of King's School, Rochester.

JAMES LYNN,\* M.A.

1804-21. Wadham Coll., Oxon. Died 1st February, 1855, aged 78.

\* Father of Mrs. Lynn-Linton, Novelist. He was Vicar at the time our old Church was destroyed (see Chapter on same). Mr. Lynn preached a sermon on the death of the Rev. James Paley, which was published in 1811.

Mrs. Lynn-Linton died at Malvern, 14th July, 1898. She was a woman of remarkable powers, and "as a satiric and polemical force in the Press, she was extraordinary."

"She fought for woman: yet with women fought,  
The sexless tribe, 'the shrieking sisterhood';  
Who made them masks of men, and fondly thought  
Like men to do; to stand where men have stood.  
She fought for woman, and for all the gifts  
Which consecrate her priestess of mankind;  
Eternal priestess—she who leads and lifts  
The man, who, but for her, crept dark and blind."—

[Sir Walter Besant, *Queen*, 23rd July, 1898.

"Sprung from a Bishop through her mother, and with a Vicar for her father, she was herself an ardent Freethinker."—(*Morning Leader*, 16 July, 1898.) At the time of her death, some comments in the Press gave implication that her childhood was gloomy (she was motherless from infancy), and her father unsympathetic. The following excerpts from



EDWARD MOTT ALFREE.

1821-32. M.A., Wadham College, Oxon., 1799; Deacon, 1795; Priest, 1798; Chaplain to Charles, Earl of Romney; Master, Free School, Maidstone, 1808; R. Warden, 1802-20; Under-Master, Grammar School, Rochester; P. C., Strood, 1821-32; Vicar, Shorne, 1832-37; Rector, St. Andrew and St. Mary Bredman, Canterbury, 1818-37. Buried in the Cathedral, aged 64.

His Son, "Edward Allfree, M.A.," was for many years Vicar of "the united parishes of St. Swithin, London Stone, and St. Mary Bothaw," London. In the preservation of the celebrated object of antiquity, known as "London Stone," the son of our old Vicar bore honourable part. It was built into the wall of the Church in 1869, and inscriptions above it record all essential historical facts. The Church itself faces Cannon Street station.

THOMAS DEACON.

1832. Son of John D., of Clerkenwell, London, Gent. Matriculated St. Alban's Hall, 1 July, 1813, aged 27. Incumbent of Strood until his death, 4 December, 1840.

JOHN PRICE ALLCOCK, M.A.

1846-7. Minor Canon, Rochester; Rural Dean, 1848-57. Afterwards Vicar of Ashford, Kent. Died July 11th, 1891. Buried at Crayford.

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letters to the writer show this view to be erroneous. The biographical detail is also not without interest.

"Brougham House, Malvern,

March 17, 1896.

Dear Sir—Thank you for your kind letter. I am sorry to find that my dear father was a Vandal—but I fear he was, from another thing he did at a living he had. But we must remember in mitigation of his crime that Æstheticism was not known when he was a young man, and that no one had the smallest perception then of Taste. It was the dreariest and the worst period of English Art Architecture that we have had. It was the period of Bumble, and no artist's soul was suffered to own itself alive in his works.

I did not know that my father's family belonged to Rochester, or that county at all. I thought that *his* father was a Norwich man, and that they went to Rochester after he came back from the wars, and that he married and settled there. No; it is quite new to me to have our name in the records of the place locally in 1577 (see Parish Registers). In 1812, I was still a 'potentiality' lost in the Infinite—not born until some years after.

March 22nd, 1896.

I cannot feel great shame for the Vandalism with which he [her father] was connected—the dear good man and graceful scholar that he was. He was only abreast of his time. . . . So . . . I hope you will lay your lash lightly on his dear memory."

[These loving words tell their own story, and the writer—feeling nothing more is needed—leaves it as it is.]

JOHN WILLIAM SHERINGHAM, M.A.

1848-64. Vicar, 1865, of Standish with Hardwick, Stonehouse, County of Gloucester, 1889; Hon. Canon of Gloucester, 1873-1889; Canon of Gloucester from 1889; Archdeacon of Gloucester from 1881.

J. G. BAILEY, M.A., LL.D.

Curate-in-charge 1864-6. Vicar of Upnor, Kent.

FREDERICK OTWAY MAYNE, M.A.

1864-74. Cambridge. Priest, 1848; Vicar of Bearsted, Kent, 1874 to 1883.

CHARLES HENRY BANNING, M.A.

1874-91. Dublin. Vicar of St. Nicholas, Rochester, 1891-94. Vicar of Christ Church, Highbury, N.

ST. BARBE SYDENHAM SLADEN, M.A.

1891-2. Second Son of Douglas Brooke Sladen, of London, Esquire. Matriculated Oriel Coll., 15 October, 1877, aged 19. B.A., 1880; M.A., 1884. Curate, from 1892, of All Hallows, Lombard Street, London, E.C.

RICHARD BRUDENAL LAWSON EXTON.

1892-8. St. Bees.

WALTER JAMES TAIT, M.A.

1898. Baliol Coll., Oxon. Former Fellow and Tutor of Worcester College, Oxford, 1864-70; Vicar of Long Benton, 1871-72; Vicar of Tavistock, 1872-83; Rector of St. Edmund's, Salisbury, 1883-90. Present Vicar.

## CHAPTER IX.

“There is no great, and no small,  
To the Soul that maketh all.”—*Emerson.*

### STROOD CHURCH BOOK, 1764.

JOHN BOGHURST,      }  
JOHN BOWES,            } Churchwardens.

THIS Book is a ponderous old folio, embellished on its outer cover as above. It contains the names of the Strood ratepayers of that day, and the amounts of their assessments. It is headed:

“An Assessment made the 4th day of May, 1764, at 4d. in the £, on Lands and Tenements, for and towards the necessary repair of the Parish Church of Strood (and ornaments, &c., thereof), in the County of Kent, by John Boghurst and John Bowes, Churchwardens; John Goldstone and Richard Otley, Overseers; together with other inhabitants.”

Its value as showing the occupiers of all the lands and tenements of that date in Strood explains the reason of its appearance here.

			Rents.	£	s.	d.
Right Hon. Lord Darnley	..	..	£40	..	0	13 4
Mr. Wm. Comport, for Ranscom	..	..	38	..	0	12 8
„ Johnston, for land	..	..	35	..	0	11 8
„ Ed. Buck*	..	..	130	..	2	3 4
„ George, senior	..	..	6	..	0	2 0
Mrs. Burgis	..	..	17	..	0	5 8
Ditto, land	..	..	6	..	0	2 0
Mr. Daniel Day	..	..	40	..	0	13 4
„ Rondeau	..	..	22	..	0	7 4
„ Wells	..	..	36	..	0	12 0
„ Cockle	..	..	3	..	0	1 0
„ Buss	..	..	3	..	0	1 0
„ George French	..	..	8	..	0	2 8
„ „ „ (for orchards)	..	..	7	..	0	2 4
„ Pilcher	..	..	2	..	0	0 8

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\* Ann, daughter of Edmund Buck, of the Temple Manor House, Strood, near Rochester, was the first wife of George Gunning, of Frindsbury, Deputy Lieutenant and Justice of the Peace for the County of Kent, (1789)—married 1775, died 1821, buried at Frindsbury, aged 69, where there is a handsome monument erected by his four sons. She died 10 November, 1810, aged 52, and was buried at Frindsbury.—*Documents of the Gunning Family*, 1834.

		Rents.	£	s.	d.
Mr. Jno. Goldstone .. ..		£26	..	0	8 8
„ „ „ lime kiln .. ..		4	..	0	1 4
„ Jno. Wansall .. ..		6	..	0	2 0
„ Thos. Heath .. ..		4	..	0	1 4
„ Wm. Kegg .. ..		13	..	0	4 4
„ Wm. Brooker .. ..		12	..	0	4 0
„ Wm. Burch, senior .. ..		4	..	0	1 4
„ Ditto, Trowards .. ..		11	..	0	3 8
„ Ditto, Steven's land with Ye Angel acre .. ..		9	..	0	3 0
„ Ditto, late Mrs. Phillips .. ..		9	..	0	3 0
„ John Boghurst .. ..		19	..	0	6 4
„ „ „ late Longs .. ..		60	..	1	0 0
„ „ „ his own late Stevens .. ..		13	..	0	4 4
„ Jacob Harvey .. ..		12	..	0	4 0
„ John Bowes .. ..		10	..	0	3 4
„ Wm. Goldick .. ..		7	..	0	2 4
„ Thos. Woods, relict .. ..		5	..	0	1 8
Mrs. Boreman .. ..		6	..	0	2 0
Mr. David Strutfield .. ..		48	..	0	16 0
„ „ „ Lawrence's Land .. ..		10	..	0	3 4
„ Edmund Denton for house and land .. ..		18	..	0	6 4
„ Edmund Denton, for Mr. Strut- field's land .. ..		4	..	0	1 4
„ Thomas Peen .. ..		14	..	0	4 8
„ A Malthouse, late Harvey .. ..		6	..	0	2 0
„ Thos. Cogger .. ..		4	..	0	1 4
„ Flinn .. ..		2	..	0	0 8
„ Henry Dunning .. ..		4	..	0	1 4
Mrs. Prescott .. ..		5	..	0	1 8
Mr. Thos. Palmer .. ..		8	..	0	2 8
„ Brice .. ..		7	..	0	2 4
„ Cutbush .. ..		7	..	0	2 4
„ Geo. Allen .. ..		8	..	0	2 4
„ Wm. Howes .. ..		6	..	0	2 0
„ Wm. Heins-Lidwell .. ..		9	..	0	3 0
„ Wm. Dunmore .. ..		10	..	0	3 4
„ Thos. Brown .. ..		10	..	0	3 4
„ Thos. Usborne .. ..		7	..	0	2 4
„ Ditto, for land .. ..		3	..	0	1 0
„ Ditto, a stable .. ..		1	..	0	0 4
„ Peter Barton .. ..		5	..	0	1 8
„ Chas. Sherman .. ..		7	..	0	2 4
„ Thos. Elliot .. ..		4	..	0	1 4
„ Ditto, a Shop .. ..		2	..	0	0 8
„ Ditto, a storehouse .. ..		2	..	0	0 8
„ Barnard Martin .. ..		6	..	0	2 0
„ Henry Loft .. ..		8	..	0	2 8
„ John Smith .. ..		11	..	0	3 8
„ Richard Peeche .. ..		3	..	0	1 0
„ Matthew Hutchison .. ..		3	..	0	1 0
„ Joseph Skinnest .. ..		4	..	0	1 4

			Rents.	£	s.	d.
Mr. Jas. Bartholomew	..	..	£9	..	0	3 0
„ Jas. Hulkes	..	..	16	..	0	5 4
„ Ditto, The Mill	..	..	64	..	1	1 4
„ Hulkes, for Marsh Land	..	..	23	..	0	7 6
„ „ „ Tythe	..	..	8	..	0	2 8
„ Henry Heyman	..	..	14	..	0	4 8
„ Ditto, a stable	..	..	2	..	0	0 8
„ John Holden	..	..	6	..	0	1 0
„ Sawyer	..	..	3	..	0	1 0
„ Thos. Sanders	..	..	3	..	0	1 0
„ Jno. Maiden	..	..	9	..	0	3 0
„ Robert Hesmer	..	..	6	..	0	2 0
„ Ditto, Mr. Strutfield's Malthouse	..	..	2	..	0	0 8
„ Wm. Burch, junr.	..	..	8	..	0	2 8
„ Jas. Walker	..	..	2	..	0	0 8
„ Wm. Brunker	..	..	2	..	0	0 8
„ Thos. Nichols	..	..	4	..	0	1 4
„ Abram. Loyd	..	..	3	..	0	1 0
„ Thos. Cobb	..	..	9	..	0	3 0
„ Wm. Stevens	..	..	9	..	0	3 0
„ Ditto, Cockles' Land	..	..	3	..	0	1 0
„ John Burch	..	..	6	..	0	2 0
„ Lend. Lester	..	..	5	..	0	1 8
„ Jas. Batt	..	..	8	..	0	2 8
„ Edward Holness	..	..	10	..	0	3 4
„ Thos. Whiting (poor) not paid	..	..	3	..	0	1 0
„ Eason Willis	..	..	5	..	0	1 8
Mrs. Taylor	..	..	5	..	0	2 0
„ Ditto, for a house	..	..	8	..	0	2 8
Mr. Jno. Bartholomew	..	..	4	..	0	1 4
„ Ditto, for a shop and house	..	..	1	..	0	0 4
„ Robert Wood	..	..	3	..	0	1 0
„ Henry Smallwood	..	..	8	..	0	2 8
„ Jno. Long	..	..	3	..	0	1 0
„ Morgan	..	..	3	..	0	1 0
„ Cable	..	..	9	..	0	3 0
„ G. Gother*	..	..	9	..	0	3 0
„ Porter	..	..	6	..	0	2 0
„ Wm. Roots	..	..	8	..	0	2 8
„ Hutchison, senior	..	..	6	..	0	2 0
Mrs. Hodges	..	..	4	..	0	1 4
„ Merson	..	..	3	..	0	1 0
„ Thos. Wilkinson	..	..	4	..	0	1 4
„ Ditto, Salts	..	..	2	..	0	0 8
Mr. Thomas Taylor	..	..	15	..	0	5 0
„ William Sanders	..	..	3	..	0	1 0
„ Josh. Spanghorn	..	..	9	..	0	3 0
„ Wm. Wilson	..	..	8	..	0	2 8
„ Jno. Turner	..	..	16	..	0	5 4

\* Last Owner of the Private Chapel in the Old Church,



	Rents.	£	s.	d.
Mr. Jno. Wilkins (Mr. Burrel's Land—				
Barrows?) .. .. .	£6	0	2	0
„ Jno. Hampton .. .. .	6	0	2	0
„ Chas. Lester .. .. .	6	0	2	0
„ Alexander .. .. .	8	0	2	8
„ G. Hickman .. .. .	10	0	3	4
„ Garretts (poor) not paid	4	0	1	4
„ Jas. Kidd .. .. .	6	0	2	0
„ Ditto, for a Yard .. .. .	4	0	1	4
„ Hodges .. .. .	5	0	1	8
„ Wm. Page .. .. .				
„ Jno. Pratt .. .. .	7	0	2	4
„ Jno. Phillips .. .. .	5	0	1	8
„ Doves .. .. .	8	0	2	8
„ G. Boucher .. .. .	10	0	3	4
„ Benjm. Sampson .. .. .	3	0	1	0
„ Jno. Ashdown .. .. .	13	0	4	4
„ Martin .. .. .	4	0	1	4
„ Dandy .. .. .	4	0	1	4
„ Ayres .. .. .	5	0	1	4
„ Boozee .. .. .	12	0	4	0
„ Wm. Boucher .. .. .	9	0	3	0
The Bridgewardens, for a yard	8	0	2	8
Mr. Josh. Maud* .. .. .	16	0	5	4
„ Austen .. .. .	16	0	5	4
Mrs. Taylor .. .. .	16	0	5	4
Mr. Jesse Dent .. .. .	5	0	1	4
„ Mitton, the Office .. .. .	3	0	1	0
„ Ditto .. .. .	4	0	1	4
Mrs. Stradwick .. .. .	8	0	2	8
Mr. Sam Payne .. .. .	6	0	2	0
„ Jno. Hopper .. .. .	7	0	2	4
„ Ditto, a yard .. .. .	4	0	1	4
„ Ditto, Mr. Trowards land	3	0	1	0
„ Wm. Page .. .. .	3	0	1	0
„ Maisdy Geer .. .. .	3	0	1	0
„ Lowry .. .. .	3	0	1	0
Mrs. Dunning .. .. .	5	0	1	8
Mr. Jas. Alexander .. .. .	6	0	2	0
„ Nathl. Hood .. .. .	6	0	2	0
„ Ditto, two shops .. .. .	5	0	1	8
„ Edward Streeter .. .. .	3	0	1	0
„ Jno. Thomas .. .. .	4	0	1	4
„ Wm. Couchman .. .. .	4	0	1	4
„ Richard Skiller .. .. .	3	0	1	0
„ Henry Green .. .. .	5	0	1	8
„ Wm. Granger .. .. .	5	0	1	8
„ Benjamin Bell .. .. .	4	0	1	4
„ Henry Skinner, junr. .. .. .	5	0	1	8

\* A Tombstone of this gentleman can be seen just outside the Belfry Door.

			Rents.	£	s.	d.
Mr. Henry Skinner, jun.	..	..	£10	..	0	3 4
Ditto, for Bucks land	..	..	4	..	0	1 4
„ Thos. Stidolph	..	..	7	..	0	2 4
„ Thos. Prior	..	..	5	..	0	1 8
„ Thos. Hudson	..	..	5	..	0	1 8
„ Jno. Page	..	..	3	..	0	1 0
„ „ Flood	..	..	3	..	0	1 0
„ Thos. Stunt	..	..	6	..	0	2 0
„ Andrew Videon	..	..	10	..	0	3 4
„ Geo. Anson	..	..	3	..	0	1 0
„ Jno. Benfield	..	..	3	..	0	1 0
„ Wallis	..	..	3	..	0	1 0
„ Smith	..	..	5	..	0	1 8
„ Wm. Page	..	..	2	..	0	0 8
„ Gardener	..	..	8	..	0	2 8
„ Robert Jones	..	..	6	..	0	2 0
„ Jno. Freeman	..	..	10	..	0	3 4
„ Thomas Hemson	..	..	3	..	0	1 0
Mrs. Susanna Luff	..	..	2	..	0	0 8
Mr. James Hulkes, junr.	..	..	12	..	0	4 0
„ „ „ The Fair Place	..	..	4	..	0	1 4
„ „ „ A Stable	..	..	1	..	0	0 4
Mrs. Cockburn	..	..	5	..	0	1 8
Mr. Carpenter (poor) not paid	..	..	5	..	0	1 8
„ Tooth Doves	..	..	4	..	0	1 4
„ Richard Webb	..	..	7	..	0	2 4
Ditto, A Storehouse	..	..	2	..	0	0 8
Ditto, *Sheaf, Land	..	..	2	..	0	0 8
„ Thos. Stevens	..	..	14	..	0	4 8
Ditto and Goldstone, late Lampard	..	..	2	..	0	0 8
„ Alexander Bridge	..	..	8	..	0	2 8
„ Jno. Hunt	..	..	4	..	0	1 4
„ William Batcheller	..	..	7	..	0	2 4
„ Knott	..	..	5	..	0	1 8
„ Jno. Masters	..	..	4	..	0	1 4
Ditto a Stable	..	..	1	..	0	0 4
„ Roberts (4d. taken short)	..	..	7	..	0	2 4
„ Benjn. Hayler	..	..	2	..	0	0 8
„ Thomas Millers	..	..	6	..	0	2 0
„ Carter (poor) not paid	..	..	3	..	0	1 0
„ Jas. Bingham	..	..	30	..	0	10 0
„ Thos. Cable	..	..	4	..	0	1 4
Ditto, Tapley's Land	..	..	5	..	0	1 8
Ditto, a Barn	..	..	3	..	0	1 0
„ Smith	..	..	7	..	0	2 4
„ Hide	..	..	4	..	0	1 4
„ William Boreman, a Shop	..	..	4	..	0	1 4
„ Robert	..	..	4	..	0	1 4
„ Abraham Osmer	..	..	4	..	0	1 4
Ditto, Bowes' Garden	..	..	1	..	0	0 4

	Rents.	£	s.	d.
Mr. John Randall .. ..	£8	0	2	8
„ John Martin .. ..	52	0	17	4
Ditto, for Gother's Land ..	3	0	1	0
„ For Land .. ..	1	0	0	4
„ Thomas Parker .. ..	5	0	1	8
„ John Townsend .. ..	7	0	2	4
„ Joseph May .. ..	7	0	2	4
Ditto for Brett's House ..	3	0	1	0
Ditto for Lawrance's Land ..	6	0	2	0
Ditto for Poor Acre .. ..	1	0	0	4
„ Hills .. ..	3	0	1	0
„ Richard Otley .. ..	10	0	3	4
„ Thomas Paramore .. ..	9	0	3	0
„ John Pitcher .. ..	4	0	1	4
Mrs. Smith (house and stable together)	11	0	3	8
Total of the Accounts ..		£33	2	0

“We, whose names are hereunto subscribed, do declare that the severall sums mentioned in the nine (last) foregoing pages are by our approbation, rated upon the respective persons concerned, and that the same is an equal rate, according to the best of our judgments.”

Witness our hands this 9th day of May, 1764.

JOHN BOGHURST,\* }  
JOHN BOWES, } Churchwardens.

J. GOLDSTON, Overseer.

GEORGE GOTHER, }  
WILLIAM GOLDICK, } Parishioners.  
THOMAS TAYLOR. }

May 10th, 1764.

“We do ratify and confirm this rate as far as we may or can by law.”

CALEB PARFECT,† Surrogate.

Present—WILLIAM STUBBS, Notary Publick.

The foregoing therefore is a complete census of the rate-payers of Strood for that date, and the total rateable value was £1895. The assessments were ridiculously low, as was common throughout the country at that date.

To-day the gross rateable value for Strood is £36,358 7s. 6d.,

\*The signature of “John Boghurst, aged 94,” is appended in the Vestry book at a meeting 16 August, 1834.

†Caleb's before mentioned clear, round hand writing is sturdily apparent in all his signatures.

which speaks well for its expansion during the intervening period.

Here follow the accounts of the Churchwardens—we will dispense with its introduction.

	£	s.	d.
“ By balance due on account—Mr. Edward Buck and Andrew Videon, late Churchwardens .....	0	11	4
Assessment—Rt. Hon. Lord Darnley .....	0	16	8
Thomas Miller, 2s. 6d., Thomas Hemson, 1s. 3d. ....	0	3	9
Received of the Provider City of Rochester, 4-30ths parts of the Neat Income of the rents and profits of the Estates given and settled to charitable uses, commonly called Richard Watts, Esqrs. Charity, so much being the proportion of this Parish—			
16th April, 1763.—Received balance of a year due at St. Michael last, in full of the above Charity .....	31	10	3½
14th April, 1764.—Ditto for ½-year due Lady Day last .....	25	15	1½
May 7.—Received of Mrs. Hill, rent land in Upnor .....	10	0	0
Received Mrs. Green, 2 years' annuity [4] ....	0	10	0
„ Mr. Gunstone, 1 year ditto .....	0	5	0
The Assessment .....	£33	2	0
Uncollected and Over-rated .....	£2	10	4—30
Received for breaking the ground in the Church for the Widow Rogers, Mrs. Mary Claxton, 6s. 8d. each .....	0	13	4
	[4] £100 17 2		
Received of John Pratt, one of the people called Quakers, by a distress by His Majesty's Justices of y <sup>e</sup> Peace—			
1761—By a Rate due in Mr. Strutfield's and May's time .....	0	4	8
1762—Ditto due in Stidolp and Gother's time. .	0	3	6
1763—Ditto due in Edward Buck and Andrew Videon's time .....	0	2	11
	0	11	1
To money received and brought over .....	100	17	2
	101	8	3
Total disbursed .....	93	4	5
Due to the Parish .....	8	3	10
(Page 5) Overcest .....	0	0	4
	£8 4 2		

This statement is signed as "approved" by the two Churchwardens, the Overseers and 4 Parishioners; J. Bowes' ornate signature closing up the page.

The contra page of Disbursements follows, and after that we have the incoming Churchwardens signing articles for the Church property they then take over.

It is worth while that this page should be given, as it is illustrative of the parochial life of the period.

	£	s.	d.
"Paid to the Overseers of the said Parish . . . the money received of Richard Watts . . . Charity . . . St. Michael .....	31	10	3½
Ditto, Lady Day .....	25	15	1½
Ditto, Mrs. Hills, rent for the Parish's Land at Upnor, due at Lady Day last, 1764, and at the same time agreed Mrs. Hills might be no longer tenant than Christmas next, 1764 .....	10	0	0
May 30th, Paid at the visitation for 4 Citations .....	0	4	0
,, Mr. Stubbs for our Oaths of Office ..	0	4	8
,, for the Register and Ministers Dinner	0	8	6
,, for Parishioners and Officers ditto, at Ye Ship .....	1	10	0
(This is an instructive item!)			
Aug. 22nd, ,, for 2 forms of prayer for ye birth of ye Prince .....	0	2	0
Nov. 9th, ,, Surrogate for bill of presentment and Citations .....	0	4	0
Nov. 18th, ,, Court fees at the Visitation .....	0	3	6
,, Wm. Boreman, the Clark, as per bill and rect. ....	3	4	6
,, Mr. Chas. Sherman, brooms and mops, as per bill .....	0	10	11½
,, Hy. Loft, for a bell rope .....	0	9	6
,, Wm. Dunmill for 3 ditto .....	0	15	0
,, Thos. Hemson, bricklayers work ....	2	15	10
,, Thos. Fisher, for this book, 24s. 8d., and for mending other books 2s. 6d., together .....	1	7	2
,, Mr. Stevens for one ringing day and sacrament wine .....	3	6	8

The usual "Ringing day" cost 6s. 8d. Hence the £3 was for wine. The noble proportions of the Church plate of this period lends credence to the accepted evidence on this point that our forefathers were accustomed to take "a good pull" at the contents when engaged at this solemn function.

Nov. 18th, Paid Wm. Boreman, for looking after ye clock .....	2	2	0
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	£	s.	d.
Nov. 18th, Paid Jas. Hulkes, for sacrament bread ..	0	2	2
(Evidently far behind in the popular appreciation.)			
Paid Owen Meredith, glazier's work .....	1	7	4
,, George Gother, shovel, spade, and lock.....	0	6	6
,, John Ashdown, a ringing day .....	0	7	8
,, James Bartholomew, for a spade and oyle (oil) .....	0	4	10
,, William Kegg, for a ringing day ....	0	6	8
,, William Brooker, for a ringing day and lowences .....	0	8	11½
,, William Spangborn, for a ringing day	0	6	8
,, Thomas Taylor, carpenter's work ..	1	18	8
,, William Burch, a ring day.....	0	6	8
,, Mr. Muddle, repairing clock .....	0	10	0
11th May, ,, Mr. Stubbs, signing the rates .....	0	3	6
,, Mr. Newman, carrying the book and attending the vestry the year ..	0	3	0
(Well worth it, too !)			
,, for vermin in the year.....	*	*	*
,, for writing the assessment and posting these accounts .....	0	5	0
,, for ringing day at Mr. Trenche's....	0	6	8
,, for ringing at Mr. Child's, being His Majesty's birthday .....	0	6	8
,, Citations for ministers & officers, &c.	0	8	0
,, Lowences for ye bricklayers at ye church .....	0	0	7
,, To 9 foxes at 12d., and 3 hedge hogs at 4d. each. ....	0	10	0
<hr/>			
	£93	4	5

"N.B.—In recovering the Quaker's rate—John Pratt—we first had a summons; secondly, a warrant of demand, which was signed by three of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace; thirdly, a warrant of distress signed by one Justice with which we distressed (a most appropriate term) and paid all charges and left the balance at his house."

We may presume that the above interpolation was noted down as a precedent for "them that come after." There was but scant comfort in it for John Pratt, however.

In the accounts of money '*Disbusted*' for 1765, we have several historically important items, from which the following are selected.

	£	s.	d.
Paid for 2 letters from Swan (?) .....	0	2	2
,, for a form of Prayer for the Queen's Birthday .....	0	2	0
,, Mr. Boghurst's man for a hedgehog .	0	0	4

		£	s.	d.
	Paid Moses Roots, for Varmine .....	0	5	4
	„ Ditto, two stotes and a hedgehog ..	0	1	0
May 3rd,	„ for a vestury .....	0	0	2
	„ Moses Roots, for a bodes' head ....	0	1	0
	„ Washing the communion linen and cleaning ye plate.....	0	2	6
	„ Wrighting and keeping the account .	0	5	0
	„ for load of lime and fetching .....	0	9	6
	„ for 5 loads of gravel and fetching ..	0	17	6
	„ for Register and Minister's dinner ..	0	8	6
Nov. 19th,	„ the visitation dinner at the Crown ..	1	10	0
April 18th,	„ Mr. Thomas Swain's bill and receipt for new casting the 5 bells into 6, with additions of mettel, &c. ....	140	10	0

This entry regarding the bells is of importance. Stalschmidt says that John Warner cast the 2nd and 3rd bells in 1788. If so, Mr. Swain's work did not endure a very lengthy period.

In the accounts of 1766, "1s. od. paid for a foxe's head" occur several times, and paid for a "wringing day" 6s. 8d. is a very frequent entry, whilst "Varmen" also in the aggregate runs up to a pretty fair figure.

In the Assessment list for 1778 we have among the uncollected items 5s. 10d. due from "Jno. Berwick, a Quaker," whom we may imagine was eventually dealt with as was his predecessor, John Pratt. Against the name of "Mr. Skiller," assessed at £3, we have a charge of 1s. 9d. uncollected with the unflattering appendix "Poor but to lazy to work." From this we may conclude that Mr Skiller was not regarded as either an ornament or benefit to the Parish.

From 1778 to 1811, the assessments had varied from 3d. in the £ to 1s. 6d. At the latter period, which was verging close upon the time our old church was condemned, out of a total rate of £281 12s. od, we have £88 13s. od. described as "uncollected," with a long list of the defaulters and their undischarged liabilities set out "in extenso." There is also much variety of penmanship exhibited in this book. The entries from 1809 to its close in November, 1812, are all by the same hand, and are beautifully and clearly written. Half of this book is unused. Its last entry records the passing of the foregoing Churchwardens' accounts (Robert Boreman and John Reader) by "J. Lynn, curate: Chas. Bathurst, Hy. Dunnings, John Cobb, Geo. Telfer, Ed. Butcher, Jno. Gouges, John Stubbersfield, John Lash, and Jno. Scoones."

The following will be read with interest :—

“AN INVETERY OF ALL THE GOODS, UTENCILS AND ORNAMENTS  
BELONGING TO THE PARRISH OF ST. NICHOLAS, STROOD.

One Bible, One Common Prayer Book, One Book of Homlies, Four Prayer Books for the Officers' Pew, One Prayer Book for the Clark, One Book for the Communion Table, One folio Church Book, containing the Rates and Disburstments ever since the first and Second year of the reign of King Phillip and Queen Mary\* in the Year 1555† and ends in the year 1763, One Purple Cloth with Gold Fring for the Communion Table, one Damask Table Cloth, two Napkins for Ditto.

	OZS.	DWTS.	
One Larg Silver Flagon.....	50	5	} With a Box to keep them in.‡
One Larg Silver Cup .....	10	12	
One Larg Silver Salver .....	18	7	
One Small do. do.....	5	0	

One Crimson Velvet Pulpit Cutchion and Cloth with a Gold Fring and a Box to Putt them in, Two Surplices, One Silk Hood, or Gown for the Clark, One Communion Table, one Oval do a Purple Carpett for the Vestury Room, Two Dozen and tour Hassacks, One Chest, One Chairs (!), One Stove, One Fire Pan, One Poker, One pair of Tongs, One Fender, One Branch, Old Pulpit Scronce (!), One Ladder with 17 Staves, Six Forms, two Large Brooms, One Matt, One Spade, One Shovle, of iron, and Pick ax, do. predeaux office of Church Wardens, One Book of Commons,

Received of Thomas Usborne and John Goldston, the Churchwardens, the above mentioned Goods, together with the Ballance of their Accounts, being the sum of Nine Shillings threepence halfpenny.

The Mark of THOS. P. PEENE,

RICHARD RUSSELL.

To recover the Quakers Church rate look back to Mr. John Boghurst and Mr. John Bowes accounts, &c.

The last note amply verifies the statutory value placed upon

\*This valuable old book has been lost. Its historic interest to Strood is priceless. Its existence in Mr. Wickham's possession is referred to by Canon Scott Robertson (see page 4, "Olden Strood," and also in the following citations from the *Archæologia*), but at the present moment its whereabouts is, unfortunately, unknown. The hope and desire that it may soon find its way back to its home among the Archives of Strood parish cannot be too heartily expressed.

† Entered in the original, 1755. The references to the reigning Monarchs prove the error.

‡ Alas! Strood now no longer possesses one single item of the four massive articles of its former old silver communion plate. Vandalism has put them into the melting pot (*i.e.*, if we can believe the silversmiths who bought them as being equally silly as those who so disposed of them) to give place to lighter and more modern vessels.

the methods whereby the unfortunate John Pratt was, as Mrs. Gamp would call it "squeeged" for his contribution to the Church rate in 1764, and which the worthy gentlemen whose names were recently recorded so judiciously set down for future reference.

Judging from the appended article by Canon Scott-Robertson in Vol. xvi. of the *Archæologia* these silver vessels were chiefly of the 16th century.

"The course pursued at Strood is recorded in the ancient Account-Book of the Churchwardens of that parish. This book had been alienated, but Mr. Humphrey Wickham, of Strood, having heard of its existence, purchased it for preservation, and he kindly permitted me to examine it. From its accounts, and the periodical Inventories of Strood Church goods which it contains, we find that the old silver chalice and its cover, both gilt, were kept until 1574, when the churchwardens sold the chalice for £3 17s. 6d. It would seem, however, that it had not been used after 1565-6, when a 'comvyon coppe' was purchased for £1 19s. 0d. We must suppose, therefore, that the old chalice was used in Strood Church, during the first seven years of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Strood is in the Diocese of Rochester, of which the Bishop (Maurice Griffith) died a few days after Queen Mary. Dr. Allen, elected to be his successor, died before he could be consecrated. Dr. Edmund Gheast, consecrated to the See in 1550, seems to have allowed the churchwardens to do as they pleased during the first five years of his episcopate. In 1565 or 1566, he probably took steps to enforce the provision of new cups for use at the Holy Communion. Evidently the authorities at Strood were not yet convinced that there would be no return to the 'Old Use.' Consequently, when they purchased a Communion Cup, they still retained the old Chalice, instead of exchanging it for the Cup. Not until a new Bishop, Dr. Edmund Freake, had been three years in the See of Rochester, did they at length get rid of the Chalice, by sale. From the price obtained for it, we should suppose that the old Chalice weighed at least 14 ounces; probably more."—*Arch. Cant.*, Page 335.\*

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\* The Strood Churchwardens Book (exhibited by Mr. Hy. Wickham), p. 7 (first entry):—"Here folowh all sych goods & sms of money as "belonh to the Chyrch of Strood in wose hands they be in;" p. 2, A<sup>c</sup> 1555, "The acmpt mayd by Edward Week & Roger Cranch, chyrch wardens of "Strood, gevyen befor the Pareche the xxiiij day of May, & in the fyrst and "second year of the Reyn of Kyng Phylp quen Mare"; p. 33 (Trans., "London & Middlesex Arch. Society visit to Rochester, 26 June, 1884).



## CHAPTER X.

### STROOD HOSPITALS.

“I was an hungred and ye gave me meat.”

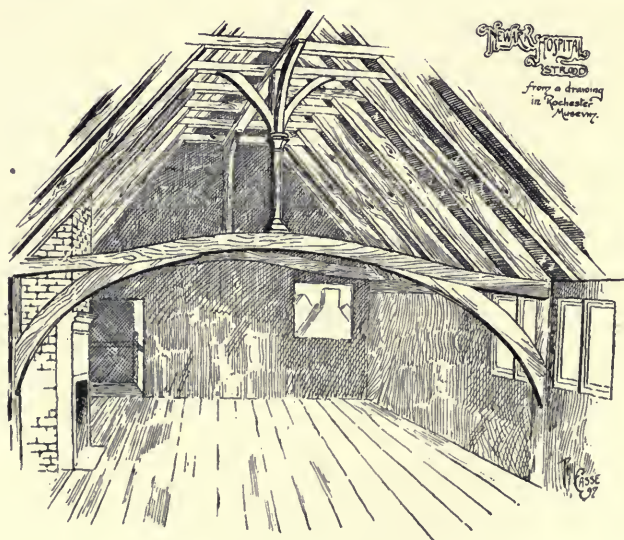
(*Chap. xxv., v. 35-6, St. Matthew.*)

Bishop Glanville's prefixed text to the instrument of Endowment of Newark Hospital.

“Had you heard the shrieks,  
And the squeals and the squeaks,  
You'd not have forgotten the sounds for weeks.”

*Ingoldsby.*

“Gilbert de Glanvill, Bishop of Rochester, at the very beginning of the reign of King Richard I., founded (1193) an



NEWARK HOSPITAL.

Hospital in this parish, not far distant from the east end of the Church, which was afterwards called the NEWARK or STROOD HOSPITAL. It was erected by him to the honour of God and the Virgin Mary, for the health of his soul and those of his predecessors, successors, and benefactors; and also for the reformation of Christianity in the Holy Land, and for the redemption of King Richard I. Also for the receiving and cherishing therein



the poor, weak, infirm, and impotent, as well neighbouring inhabitants as travellers from distant places, who should be suitably provided with beds, victuals, and drink until their departure from thence, when others of the like sort should be sustained there for ever."

The good bishop appointed a master over it, to be nominated in future by his successors. The said master was to be of the priestly status of a "regular," and was "to have with him as many 'regulars' as might enable him to perform the divine services in a proper manner." He "exempted the Hospital and precincts from all archidiaconal and decanal jurisdiction, so that the same should be subject solely to the authority of the Pope, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishop of Rochester." Lastly, he ordained that after a sufficient allowance for the Master, the priests, and the servants, "all the residue should be applied in relieving the poor, who should be increased according to the improvement of their revenues."

In the 33 year King Edward I. the bailiffs of Rochester distrained on the goods of the Master of the Hospital for "tallage" assessed on the "Hundred of Rochester." The Master proving the Hospital to be in Frindsbury,\* in the "Hundred of Shamel," the bailiffs had to disgorge, and the Master complaining next year to the King on this account, His Majesty directed his writ to the bailiffs of Rochester to desist in future."†

From the first establishment of this hospital in Strood it got small liking from the monks of Rochester, "and a perpetual jealousy subsisted between the monks of St. Andrew and the members of it." The monks objected to the diversion of so substantial a portion of their former revenues, and the "Hospitallers" equally failed to see the fun of yielding up any of these very useful privileges. Matters came to a climax between these rivals one day, which is quaintly related by Lambarde‡ in the manner following:—

RELIGIOUS SKIRMISH BETWEEN THE MONKES OF ROCHESTER  
AND THE BRETHREN OF STROOD.

"It befell in the reigne of King Edward the first, by occasion

\* *Hasted*, Vol. III., 8vo, pp. 553-4.

† The Hospital itself was doubtless in the Parish of Strood, though a great part of its landed possessions were in Frindsbury.—H.S.

‡ *Perambulations*, black letter edition, 1576, pp. 290-1-2.

of a great and long drought of the aire that the Monkes of Rochester were agreed among themselves to make a solemn procession from their owne house through the Citie, and so to Frensbury, on the other side of the water, of a speciall intent and purpose to pray to God for raine.

"And bycause the day of this their appointed journey happened to be vehemently boisterous with the winde, the which would not only have blowne out their lightes and tossed their banners, but also have stopped the mouthes of their synging men, and have toiled themselves in that their heaue and masking attire, they desired lycense of the Maister of Stroud Hospital to pass through the Archyard of his house, whereby they might bothe ease their company, and save the glorie of their shewe, which otherwise through the inirie of the weather must needs have bene greatly blemished.

"The Maister assented easily to their desire, and (taking it to be a matter of no great consequence) never made his brethren of the house privie thereunto. But they, so soon as they understood of this determination called to mind that their Hospitall was of the foundation of Gilbert Glanville (sometime a bishop of Rochester), betweene whom and the predecessours of these monkes, ther had been great heates\* for the erection of the same: and therefore, fearing that the monkes (pretending a procession) intended to attempt somewhat against their priviledges (as in deede all others in Papesterie were exceedingly jealous of their prerogatives) they resolved with all their might to resist them. And for that purpose they bothe furnished themselves and procured certaine companions also (whom the Hystorie calleth Ribaldes), with clubbes and battes to assist them, and so (making their ambush in the Archyard) they awaited the Monkes' coming. It was not long, but the monkes (having made all things redy) approached in their battell array, and with banner displayed, and so (minding no harme at al) entred boldely into the house, and through the house passed into the Archyard, merely chaunting their Latine Letaine. But when the brethren and their Ribaldes had espied them within their daunger, they ranne upon them, and made it raine suche a shouer of clubbes and coulstanes upon the monks'

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\* Bishop Glanville was much hated by the Monks of Rochester Priory. In addition to founding out of their revenues this Hospital of Strood, he had also very largely reversed the proceedings of his predecessor Gundulphus, who in 1080 (about) "threwe out the Chanons (of Rochester) and brought Monkes into their place; . . . and where as he found but halfe a dozen Secular Priestes in the Church, he never ceased till he had brought at leaste three score Monkes into the place." But what caused more disturbance than anything else, Gundulphus was identified in aims and efforts with "Lanfranc . . . and was wonderfully bussed in divorcing Chanons and Secular Priests from their wives, . . . although the law of God maketh the accouplement honorable, . . . and the law of this countrie (without any checke) allowed it in Priests. . . . And decreed . . . from thenceforth Priests Sonnes should not be heires to their fathers' benefices." When Glanville died "they committed him obscurely to the ground, without ringing of Bell, celebration of Service, or dooing of any Funerall Obsequies."—(Lambarde, pp. 299-300-I.)

copes, cowles and crownes, that for a while the miserable men knew not which way to turn them. After a time the monkes called their wittes and spirrites together, and then (making virtue of the necessitie) they made each man the best shift for himselfe, that they could: some traversing the ground declined many of the blowes, and yet now and then bare off with head and shoulders: others used the staves of their crosses, behaving themselves like pretie men: others made pykes of their banner poles: And others (flying in to their adversaries) wrested their weapons out of their handes: amongst the rest, one (saving his charitie) laide lode upon a married priest, absolving him (as mine authour saith) *A culpa*, but not *A pena*. Another drave one of the brethren into a deepe ditch: and a third (as big as any Bul of Basan) espied (at y<sup>e</sup> length) y<sup>e</sup> postern, or back doore of y<sup>e</sup> Archyard, whereat he ran so vehemently w<sup>th</sup> his head and shoulders y<sup>t</sup> he bare it cleane downe before him and so both escaped himselfe, and made the way for the rest of his fellowes who also, with all possible haste conveyed themselves out of the jurisdiction of the Hospital, and then (shaking their ears) fel a fresh to their Orgia, I should have said to their former Orisons.. After this storme thus blowne (or rather born) over, I do not mervail if the monkes (as y<sup>e</sup> reporter saith) never sought to carrie their procession through Stroud Hospital for avoiding of y<sup>e</sup> windes, for indeede it could not lightly blowe more boisterously out of ani quarter. And thus out of this Hystorie arose the Byword of Friendsbury Clubbes (a term not yet forgotten.)\* The land of Friendsbury was long since given by Offa, the King of Midle England, to Eardulph, then bishop of Rochester, under the name of Eslingham,† *cum appendicijs*, although at this day this other beareth countenance as the more worthy of the twaine. The benefice of Friendsbury (together with that of Dartford) was, at the suite of Bishop Laurence, and by graunt of the Pope, converted to an appropriation, one (amongst many) of those monstrous byrthes of covetousness, begotten by the man of Rome, in the dark night of superstition, and yet suffered to live in this day light of the Gospell, to the great hindrance of learning, the

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\* According to Harris (p. 128) the "Ribaldes" alluded to were men of Frindsbury. It is mortifying to learn that for their gallant and effective service to our Strood Hospitallers on this occasion, these "wholesome neighbours" of ours were subjected to a humiliating penance. On every Whit Monday a certain number of Frindsbury men, "carrying their clubs with them," had to march to Rochester Cathedral, there to do penance and crave forgiveness. As these pilgrims passed along the streets to their penitential journey, no great feat of imagination is needed to picture the derision and jeers which greeted them. According to Ireland (*Views of the Medway*) this custom survived till a late period, the boys of Strood and Frindsbury meeting every May Day on the Bridge and having a faction fight. Whether betwixt themselves, or our two forces arrayed against the boys of Rochester, the writer is unable to say.

† This Manor was a former possession of Thomas, Lord Cromwell, Wolsey's Secretary, whom Shakespeare has immortalised. He was beheaded on Tower Hill for High Treason, in the 32nd year of the reign of the good allround Butcher, King Henry VIII.

empoverishment of the ministerie, and the infamie of our profession.”\*

From this account we may infer that if Strood has hitherto gone “unhonoured and unsung,” it was not for lack of spirit and martial material.

FROM WEEVER’S FUNERAL MONUMENTS WITHIN THE DIOCESE  
OF ROCHESTER.

“Gilbert de Glanvil (before mentioned), a gentleman of an ancient family, was consecrated to this Bishopricke. September 29, ann. 1185. Betweene this man and his Monkes of Rochester was larg and continuall debate, by occasion whereof hee tooke away from them all their moveable goods, all the ornaments of their Church, their writings and evidences, yea, and a great part of their lands, possessions and privileges. Wanting money to follow their suites against him, they were forced to coyne the silver of Saint Paulinus Shryne into money. These contraversies were ended no otherwise than by his death, which happened June 24, 1214, having ruled his contentious charge 29 yeares. But the hatred of these Monkes against him was so dying with him, as they would afford him no manner of obsequies, but buried him most obscurely, or rather basely, without either ringing, singing, or any other solemnite, and furthermore abused him with such like rime doggerell :—

“Glanvill Gilbertus nulla bonitate refertus  
Hic jacet immitis & amator maxime litis  
Et quia sic litem dum vixit solet amare  
Nunc ubi pax nulla est, est aption inhabitare.

“These blacke Monkes (whom I thinke if the matter were well examined would prove to be in the fouler faulte) were too malicious to remember that this Bishop founded S. Marie’s Hospitall at Strowd, neare adjoyning to this Citie, called the *New Work*, and endowed it with a livelihood of £52 of yearely profits which it now enjoyeth.”

The situation of this hospital was in Newark Yard, at the back of the High Street; the “archyard” where this memorable struggle took place being part of the present Fair Field and the land covered by the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway, with the higher ground added.

Bishop Glanville in addition built a quay of stone at the Strood end of the Bridge, and upon this quay he erected a chapel (St. Mary’s) “at which any passenger crossing the Bridge might

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\* William Lambarde was born in 1536—presumably in London. He was elected a Bencher of Lincoln’s Inn, a Master in Chancery, Keeper of the Rolls, and Keeper of the Records of the Tower. He was also in his time a Warden of Rochester Bridge. He died at Greenwich, where he had founded a Hospital for 20 poor persons in 1602.



previously kneel in devotion, or subsequently offer thanksgiving. On the Quay, around the Bridge, he also built a few houses. The whole of these erections, the quay, the wharfage dues arising from it, the chapel upon it, and the houses there, he gave to the Hospital of St. Mary. This agrees with Lambarde's description of the old wooden bridge, which, he says, stood "over against Strood Hospital."

No doubt the occasional drowning of a pilgrim had a considerable effect in accelerating the volume of oblations offered upon the altar of the little Chapel at our end of the Bridge; it also brought its concurrent payments for masses and prayers for the souls of the lost. As the money was devoted to the services of the poor and to ministrations for the relief of the sick and suffering, it would be difficult to suggest a better object for its uses. In the year 1330, Bishop Hamo de Hethe found many abuses had crept into the mode of governance of this Hospital. He devised and put in force some stringent rules to remedy these defects. The Hospital continued its beneficent mission until the 31st year of King Henry VIII., when that Merrie Monarch, in his rebellion against the rule of the Pope, sequestered its belongings, and gave the site, and all its revenues, to the newly-created Dean and Chapter of Rochester Priory (Cathedral), where, according to Hasted, "the inheritance of them yet remains."\*

Mr. George West, as builder, removed, some 25 years ago, the last remaining portion of this old Hospital—the late Mr. Humphrey Wickham purchasing such materials as possessed any historic interest. Mr. Wickham had the original sketch taken of these premises, from which the accompanying view is copied. In this locality, as building operations went on, immense numbers of skeletons have been, at various times, unearthed. After being "knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's spade," these gruesome fragments of past humanity were, by divers boys of the locality—by whom the commercial utility of these ossified remains were promptly recognised—gathered together and conveyed to a certain rag and bone merchant, and by them

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\* The whole of the Hospital possessions are now vested in the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, to whom, in 1866, the Dean and Chapter gave up their Estates. The greater part of this particular property has since been sold. The Church of St. Mary stands upon a portion of it.



converted into cash. The purchaser of these "mortal frames" was an ancient gentleman of the "Krook" type, who formerly carried on business in an arch, now filled in, under the South-Eastern Railway, which fronted the Amalgamation Inn, Station Road. It is, of course, highly probable that the buyer was unaware of the nature of the merchandise offered. Who may be wearing the buttons fashioned from these ancient sojourners of Strood, is happily unknown. On excavating a cellar for the New Fountain Inn, the writer well remembers the disinterment of a series of skeletons. Presumably they were of those persons who had died in our old Hospital.\*

The revenues of this Hospital were derived from "impropriations of the Churches of Aylesford, St. Margaret's, and Halling, and of the small tythes of Strood."†

In 1330, a mandate received by the Dean of Mallyng from the Official at Rochester, commanding him to cite the Prior and Convent of Tonbridge to appear, by themselves or a Proctor, on Monday next, after the Feast of the Translation of St. Thomas the Martyr, in the Church of Mallyng, to answer certain articles of Robert, the Master, and the brethren of the Hospital of Strode, which appear to be for the subtraction for  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years of the tithes of a place commonly called Horsheist, in the parish of Aldyng.‡

The two first following items of bequests for Altar Lights refer to this Hospital of Newark.

STROOD, "NEWERKE."

OUR LADY OF PITY.—Lum. b<sup>e</sup> Marie Noui operis de Strode voc' le pite xij<sup>d</sup>.—Wm. Leusham, 1475. To our lady of Pytte, in y<sup>e</sup> Newarke iijj<sup>d</sup>. John Munde, 1524.

ST. SAVIOUR.

Lum. Sancti Saluatoris de Newerke iij<sup>d</sup>. Thos. Hadds, 1482.

ROCHESTER (St. William's Shryne.)

Thos. Noone decrepiduo 1523. Thos. Newton, bocher, of Strode, 1523.

\* One section of the storm water drainage passes from the High Street to Station Road, and thence along Newark Passage to the High Street. In the excavations in the immediate neighbourhood of Newark Street, 31 skeletons were unearthed, one skull being of a very abnormal size. Whether this "globe" belonged to the Priest whom Lambarde described as being "big as any Bul of Basan," is highly conjectural.

† See the several grants of premises and confirmations of this Foundation in *Reg. Roff.*, pp. 633-4, 642-3; and by Edward III. by *Inspecimus* in his 6th year. *Dryd. Mon.*, Vol. II., p. 434.—*Fisher's History*, p. 247.

‡ *Arch. Cant.*, p. 334.

John Ryvett, 1526, left a charge on rent of his house, "whiche standeth betwixte the Aungle (Angel) and the cheker," to provide "ij tapers of a pounce a pece for ever, before our lady in the quyre of Saynt Clement's Church."\*

With these sources of income, the rents from the properties near the Bridge, and the offerings from the Chapel upon it, it must have been, for those days, a considerable establishment. When surrendered, 26 June, 1540, by its last Master, "John Wyldbore,† together with the buildings belonging to it, the Manor of Hawkins, and all their lands and possessions in Aylesford, Halling, Stroud, Malling, Snodland, or elsewhere, to Walter, prior, and the Convent of Rochester and their successors for ever . . . . the revenues of the Hospital, and the estates belonging to it, were, at the time of its suppression, valued at £52 9s. 10½d.‡

The Master of this Hospital was also Vicar of Strood. Dr. Harris§ said he should speak of this Hospital "in the proper place." He never lived to do so.

\* *St. Paul's Ecclesiological Society's Trans.*, Vol. III., p.p. 5, 283-4, & 291.

† "The Master of Strowde to be always a learned man, and to read a Lecture on Divinity on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, in the Monastery, and to be accounted one of the Prebendaries (of Rochester), but with no portion of the dividend, for it is worth £30 a year. One preacher to be a Prebendary without dividend, with £20. The Archdeacon to be one of the Prebendaries, with only 40s. yearly and his part of the dividend, as his Archdeaconry is worth 40 marks. The other Prebendaries to have £13 6s. 8d., and the dividend . . . . A Schoolmaster to teach freely grammar to poor men's children, to have £10. Four Canons, each of them yearly £10. The Dean and Prebendaries and these four Canons to have one benefice, and to be absent without leave."—*State Papers* Henry VIII., 1540 (379).

‡ *Hasted*, Vol. III., p. 555. See also *State Papers* Henry VIII., Vol. XIV., Part I, p. 536.

*George, Lord Cobham, to Cromwell.*

There is a farm of the Bishop of Rochester, called the Lordship of Halling, now fallen into the King's hands, by default of John Fowle. Begs Cromwell to write to Wilbore, the Bishop's Receiver, that it may be given to a friend of the writer.

31 May, [1534].

COBHAM.

—*State Papers, Dom.* Henry VIII., Vol. VII. Appendix No. 21.

*John Johnson to Cromwell.*

At my coming to Kent, I delivered your letter to the Master of Nyewerke, near Rochester, being admitted by your Mastership Receiver-General of the Bishop of Rochester's lands, to the King's use. As you commanded, I told him to prepare as much money as he could, and he caused divers of the tenants to have their rents ready. The Master, according to your letters, was content that I should have the parsonage of Hawling: and the Prior of Christchurch, at your request, is very good to me.—*State Papers, Dom.* Henry VIII., Vol. VII., Appendix No. 27.

§ *History of Kent*, Vol. I., 1719.

Hasted's list of the Vicars of Strood commences with "RICHARD JACKSON, 1501." We then have a blank extending to 1630, when "ROBERT CHAMBERLAIN" is named.

#### MASTERS OF NEWARK HOSPITAL.

JOHN DE HALLINGBURY. 16 Ed. I. (*Reg. Roff.*, p. 149) where he is also described as rector of Hallingbury.

JOHN BLUNDELL. 10 Ed. II. (*Ibid.*, p. 113).

WM. DE BASYNG. 1307 (See *M.P.'s of Rochester*).

Master Wm. de Basynges, Master of the Hospital of St. Mary, Strode, as chief surveyor and clerk of the works of the King's Castle of Rochester, 14 May, 1378.—*Pat. Rolls*, 1 Rich. II., m. 34.

[This was an appointment, renewed annually, see next.]

2 August, 1380, appointed during pleasure, chief surveyor and clerk of the works of the Castles of Roucestre and Ledes, and to take masons, carpenters, and other workmen therefor, provide carriage and execute the said works by the survey and control of Hugh Herland, carpenter.—*Pat. Rolls*, 4 Rich. II., m. 23.

20 March, 1383—Grant to Wm. Basyng, master of the new work, Strode, and Robt. Rowe, special pontage for 7 years in aid of the building of the larger bridge over the Medeway between Roucestre and Strode, by survey of John de Cobeham, John Philipott and John Newenton, Knights, and Master Henry Sevele, stone mason; to be taken from those who cross the smaller bridge, viz., 1d. from every horseman, and  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. from every foot passenger, except country people going to the Wednesday and Friday market (*Pat. Rolls*, 6 Rich. II., m. 1), as is now taken by watermen and boatmen from persons crossing, with a proviso that country men coming to market on Friday be quit of the same till two hours after nine in the morning.

Renewed 26 August, on account of the death of Wm. Basyng, because sealed in March last.—*Pat. Rolls*, 7 Rich. II., m. 29.

JOHN DE RODESWELLE (appointed by Archbishop Walter during vacancy of See of Rochester). Ed. II. (*Reg. Roff.*, p. 112.)

There was a Master John de Rodeswelle, steward of the lands of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who, with Adam Atte Watre, of Maidstone, and others, was witness of a confirmation of a letters patent by the Prior of Christ Church, Canterbury, dated 21 March, 1326, granting some lands to John de Breydeston.—*Pat. Rolls*, 1 Ed. III., m. 4.

29 Dec., 1331.—Commission to Masetr John de Rodeswell, Thos. de Faversham, Nigel de Whiteacre, and Wm. de Reculvre, to supervise the banks on the coast between Sere and Mergate in Thanet Island.—*Pat. Rolls.*, 5 Ed. III., m. 8.

ROGER WYGAYN. 34 Ed. III. (*Ibid.*, p. 636).

JOHN SWAN. 1390-1. (*Dover Plea Rolls*).

PHILLIP MONTGOMERY. 1399 (*Ibid.*)

A Master Phillip de Montgomery, vicar of Wambergh, in the diocese of Salisbury, was presented to Montgomery, in the diocese of Hereford, in 1382, being an exchange of benefices with Robert Gilbert.—*Pat. Rolls*, 6 Rich. II., m. 24.

WILLIAM BATESFORD. 1406.

RICHARD BRACKENBURY. 21 Ed. IV. (*Reg. Roff.*, p. 139.)

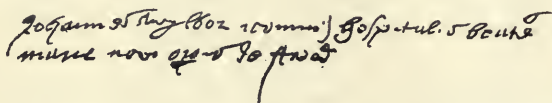
WM. BARKER. 17 Henry VII. (*Ibid.*, p. 426).

JOHN GREFFREY. 1406 (add. MSS. 33881) bequest by John

Russell, mercier, of Strode, to John Greffrey, parish priest of Strode.

JOHN WYLBOR.

The facsimile here given is that of the actual signature of its last master, John Wyldbore, as it is appended to the official



deed of resignation which yet exists in the chapter house book at the Record Office.

“Johannes Wylbor iconim<sup>s</sup> Hospitalis, beate Marie noni operis de Strood.”

“John Wylbor was Vicar of Lamberhurst 1515-19, Master of Strood Hospital called ‘Newark,’ from 1517 till its suppression, Vicar of St. Nicholas, Rochester, 1519-22, of Isleham, Cambridge (a peculiar of the Bishop of Rochester) 1521-3, Master of Cobham College, 1533-4, and Rector of Chiselhurst, 1523 to 1552; in 1542 Vicar of Essington. On the 1st July, 1534, he was appointed Chaplain to Henry VIII., being styled ‘John Wylbore, M.A., Clerk of the Parish Church of Chiselhurst, Kent,’ and was granted license of non-residence on his benefices (*State Papers*, Henry VIII., vol. vii., No. 933). His will, dated 20 June, 1551, was proved 23 April, 1553 (p. c.c., 8 Tashe). He evidently contemplated being buried in the Cathedral Church of Rochester, of which he was a prebendary.”

#### THE HOSPITAL OF WHYTE DITCHE.

Strood also possessed another ancient Hospital which stood on the slope of Strood Hill, the north-western corner of the Recreation Ground, with the little belt of land facing the London Road, being its legendary site, though documentary references point to its being higher up. Strood Hill was called “Spittal” Hill: and the Hospital, which was for lepers, —a disease that pilgrimages and wars in the Holy Land brought upon us—was called “White-ditch.” “The Hill . . . is called Spittal Hill, so denominated because at a little distance from it there stood the Hospital of White-ditch.\* The field on the right, in which it was situated, still retains the name of White-ditch, but no vestige of the buildings is discernible. It was a leprous Hospital, consisting of brethren and sisters, and

\* The street at the West end of Dartford is called Spittal Street for the same reason.



dedicated to St. Bartholomew. By whom and when founded are circumstances unknown, as are likewise the time of its dissolution, and the persons who obtained a grant of the premises, and of other lands that might appertain to it.”\*

The Parish Registers of Strood, which date from April, 1565, contain the following interesting entries in connection with this Hospital.

“1570.—A poore man of the Spittale House, buried xvi. Aprill.”  
 “ „ A poore wooma of hoy doietche was buried xxvii. August.”



From an Old Print.]

STROOD HILL.

“1572.—Joane, of Whyt Ditch, buried the vii. December.”  
 “1586.—John Baker, oute of y<sup>e</sup> Spittle House, the vi. daie of November.”  
 “1592.—A Stranger oute of y<sup>e</sup> Spittle House, the xiiij. daie of Marche.”  
 “1601.—Edwd., out of the Mary Reste,† was buried the xxvi. daie of Ffebruary.”  
 “1620.—John Pocklye, Master of Spittle House, the 9th daie of June.”

\* *Kentish Travellers' Companion*, 1790, p. 128, by the Rev. Samuel Denne.

† This entry may refer to Newark Hospital, presuming that private benevolence carried on its former mission; or it may have reference to the property in the High Street, formerly existent opposite North Street (see illustration), which has the legendary reputation of being used as a Hospital. Concerning this property mention is made later in this chapter.



Newark Hospital was founded, says Hasted, "at the very beginning of the reign of King Richard I." (1189 to 1199). In the 31st year of the reign of King Henry VIII. this Hospital was disendowed, and its possessions given to the Cathedral of Rochester. This brings us to 1540. It is open to possibility that private benevolence might have carried on the work at Newark after its revenues were sequestered; though as such efforts would have shown something approaching a quasi-defiance of the ruling powers, its probability is lessened.

A further factor in this question is that of the Workmen's Institute premises here shown, and of which mention is made



*Drawn by R. J. Beale]*

*[From Photo by A. G. Blackman.*

#### WORKMEN'S CLUB AND INSTITUTE.

in the preceding footnote. Concerning this building, legendary evidence affirms it to have had some connection with Newark Hospital, possibly as its successor, seeing that that of Newark was alienated.

The ancient front of the Workmen's Institute faced west, and over its principal doorway were placed four curious bricks. Two of them represent Susannah and the Elders; the third, St. Hubert and the Stag; and the fourth, the Story of Jael and Sisera. Higher up the wall were two others—both obliterated.\*

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\* *Sketches of Rochester*, Phippen, p. 194.

The bricks here shown were incorporated in the new building by the late Mr. Martin Bulmer. They are on the west side of the doors leading to the Lecture Hall of the Institute.

To revert to our subject. Two, out of the above six statements, specially mention the compound word "White-ditch," and the other four "Spittle house." There is no evidence of Newark Hospital ever being so described. On the other hand, we have the ancient name of Strood Hill (emphasized by that of Dartford) with the second entry Hoy (High) ditche, which, all



PANEL,—ANCIENT BRICKS, INSTITUTE, STROOD.

*From a Photo by J. H. Weekes.*

taken together, establishes beyond reasonable question that the building referred to in these entries is that of the Leper Hospital on the hillside. Also, that about 1620, shortly after the "burialle" of John Pocklye—who, probably, was its last Master, it came to an end. It will also be remembered that Newark Hospital had its own cemetery.

Close examination of the Dutch print (1667)\* will reveal the Strood foreground, to the North, to have abrupt banks of chalk cliff, sufficient to lend credence to the name of High Ditche and White Field. Process of time, denudation, and the work of man, have combined to reduce, to a large extent, the boldness

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\* See the Dutch Invasion.

of their former outline. Indeed, its character has changed much within living memory.

“Monney expended the iiij<sup>th</sup> of Januairii, 1579, at the goeing of me, RICHARD HARLOWE, Maior, to London, and others of my brethren, to answer my Lord Chefearone and others upon a suite made to the saide Lorde Chefe Baron by Martin Coatis. Item : Given to the poore of White Ditche,\* iiij<sup>d</sup>.”

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\* *Arch. Cant.*, Vol. II., p. 82.

NOTES.—To the Vicar and Churchwardens the Author is indebted for free permission to search these Registers; and to Mr. W. J. Earle, Verger, for his ever ready courtesy and assistance.

The king-post of Newark Hospital, shown in the illustration at the head of this chapter, was discovered on 10th February, 1899, by Mr. C. A. Cobb, of Strood. In pulling down an old lodge, formerly the property of the late Mr. Humphrey Wickham, this post came to light. Mr. Cobb has now presented it to the Rochester Museum. In addition to the identity afforded by the sketch, it has been also identified by Mr. George West, who personally presented it to Mr. Wickham on the demolition of the old building many years back.

## CHAPTER XI.

### STROOD AND THE PILGRIMS.

"Let them have meat enough, woman—half a hen;  
There be old rotten pilchards—put them off too;  
'Tis but a little new anointing of them  
And a strong onion that confounds the 'flavour.'"

—*Love's Pilgrimage.*

MENTION has been made in the preceding chapter of those devotees who, in great numbers passed through Strood, either as pilgrims to the Holy Land, as votaries at the tomb of St. Thomas A'Becket at Canterbury, or to the local Shrines at Rochester.\*

From time immemorial the staple industry of Strood appears to have consisted of fishing; and whatever circumstances may have lent a passing inflation of prosperity to the town, fishing probably constituted its chief and lasting avocation.



However, small doubt need be felt that our worthy progenitors did not confine themselves to fishing in salt waters if more lucrative victims, in the shape of passing pilgrims, could be netted on shore.

Present day experiences furnish but little scope to the imagination if we attempt to realise the local incident and colour this traffic lent to daily life in Strood. The religious thought of the nation, nay, almost the civilised world, ran in one groove, and the exception would have been to find a person who was not living under its influence, and ordering his life by

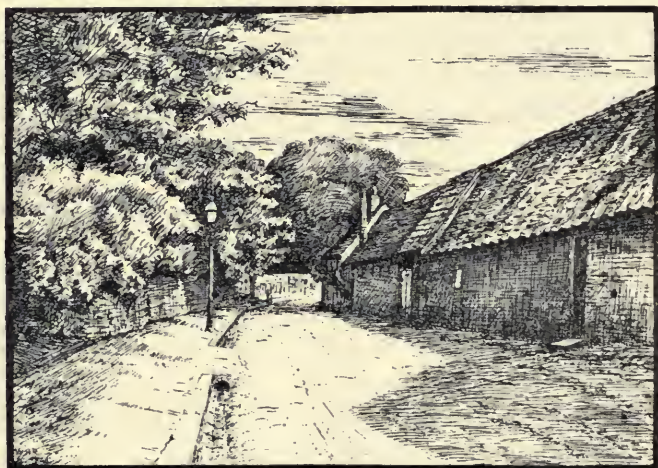
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\*In a garden opposite the Parish Church was found, some 140 years ago, an ancient bell metal seal of an oval form. Its design represented the Saviour on the cross, and a half length figure of a monk or saint underneath in a niche. It belonged to the priory of Bisseter, in Oxfordshire. Also there was dug up, in 1832, in a garden a little to the north of the Church, another seal of the same metal. It is supposed to have belonged to a monastic establishment at Steeple Morden, in Cambridgeshire. This relic was formerly in the possession of the late Mr. H. Wickham. It is shown in the sketch.



its precepts. As such pilgrimages were held in the highest public estimation, the great mass of the people, at one time or another, performed these perilous journeys; and as they were in many cases performed on foot, lodging and other accommodation were absolute needs. Throughout the 12th, 13th and 14th centuries this stream of pilgrims continued, and out of it and by it Strood grew in population and prosperity, if it did not grow in grace.

These pilgrims prayed in the various churches they passed, and as their means allowed, offered oblations upon the different



FOOT OF STROOD HILL, LOOKING EAST.

*Drawn by W. H. Reynolds.*

altars. Particularly they did so in the Chapel of St. Mary, on the Quay, before crossing the narrow and dangerous bridge into Rochester. So much had Strood expanded by reason of this traffic that before the close of the 12th century Bishop Gilbert de Glanville found it necessary—as already stated—to constitute Strood as a separate parish.

Thousands flocked here from all parts of the country to the silver shrine of Bishop Paulinas, of Rochester, who was canonized A.D. 1087. After St. Thomas A'Becket's murder at Canterbury, on the 29th December, 1170, the stream of pilgrims grew in volume and Strood profited accordingly.

“Queen Isabella, when she came to Strood on the 24



October, 1357, entered the Chapel of St. Mary, at Stroud, and offered an oblation of 6s. 8d. in honour of the 11,000 virgins.\* Many other travellers did likewise.”—(*Scott Robertson*).

In 1201, about the time the Hospital was finished, and “the olde bishop’s Shryne” having “declined to naught, . . . . A Scot, of Perth, . . . . by trade of life a baker of bread . . . . in zeale so fervent that in vowe he promised and indeede attempted, to visite the holy land (as they called it) and the places where Christ was conversant on earth . . . . passed through Kent and made Rochester his way.” Here the worthy baker rested for two days and highly edified the monks by his piety and liberality. “But ere he had gone farre from the Citie,” towards Canterbury, his servant led the pious pilgrim out of the way, murdered, and then robbed him. The body was afterwards discovered by the Rochester monks, and was “conveyed to St. Andrewes and laid in the quyre.” Ultimately, in 1266, he was canonized and so promoted “from a poore baker to a blessed martyr. Here shewed he miracles plentifully . . . . until these latter tymes, in which the beames of Gods trueth . . . . did quite chase away and put to flight this and other gross cloudes of will worship, superstition and idolatrie.”†

At that time, however, the effect was such that, as Canon Scott Robertson says, “thousands flocked to his tomb in the north transept of their choir . . . . and the Hospital of St. Mary’s, Newark, flourished,” and with it flourished the inhabitants of Strood also—or at least did their best in the effort.

The “olde bishop’s shryne” alluded to, was that of Paulinas, “a curious worke of cleane silver,” which, according to Lambarde, the monks had melted down in their days of sore need, “for maintenance of their expenses . . . . in suite to Rome,” when struggling against the sensible alterations Bishop de Glanville had introduced.‡

Having killed the goose that laid their golden eggs, the monks were only too glad to get so good a substitute as St. William, of Perth, afterwards proved himself to be. The

\* Cotton MSS.. Galba E. 14 Leaf, 32 d.

† Lambarde, Edition 1576, pp. 302-3.

‡ These matters are more fully dealt with in the Chapter relating to the Hospitals.

Infectious Hospital at Delce takes its name from this Scottish baker.

In addition to the hospitals, this traffic caused a number of inns to spring into existence to cater for the entertainment of the passing visitors, and in various other ways stamped its impress upon the life and architecture of our town.

The mention of Thomas A'Becket brings us to a passage in the life of that celebrated Saint and his experiences of Strood hospitality, which is, to say the least, passing strange.

The earliest writer of this striking *tale*, so disreputable to Strood, appears to be one Polydore Virgil.\*

Lambard quotes the story as follows:—

St. Thomas A'Becket, when returning from London and “(being at length reputed for the King's enemy) began to be so commonly neglected, contemned and hated, that when as it happened him upon a time to come to Stroude, the inhabitants thereabouts (being desirous to despite that good father) sticked not to cut the taile from the horse on which he roade, binding themselves thereby with a perpetual reproach. For afterwards, by the will of God it soe happened that everyone which came of that kindred of men which had plaid that naughty pranke were borne with tailes even as brute beasts bee.”

The story has several variants: “Boetius (the Scottish chronicler) writeth “that the lyke plague lighted upon the men of Middleton, in Dorsetshyre, who, bycause they threwe fishe tailes in great contempt at Saint Augustine, where, bothe themselves and their posteritie, stricken with tailes, to their perpetual infamie and punishment.”

Canterbury also, in the person of “One Brockes,” has a similar evil fame, whilst the following is another version of our own story:—

“St. Augustine came to a certaine towne inhabited by wicked people, who refused hys doctryne and preaching uterly, and drof hym oute of their towne, castyng on hym the tayles of

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\* Virgil was an Italian sent to England by the Pope as “collector of Peter's pence.” In addition to the ingathering of these apostolic benefactions, Virgil, while here, also secured and *kept* four English ecclesiastical preferments. At the command of Henry VII. he wrote a *History of England*, a twelve years' task, where, apparently, this story first appeared. Virgil died at his birthplace, Urbino, Italy, 1555. (p. 576, Burrowes' “*Encyclopedia Arts, Science and Literature*,” vol. x.)

thornback or lyke fysshes : wherefore he besought Almyghty God to shewe his judgement on them ; and God sent to them a shamefull token, for the chyldren that were born after in the place, had tayles, it is sayd, till they had repented them. It is sayd comynly that this fyll at Strode, in Kente ; but blessed be Gode at thys daye is no such deformyte.”\*

Yet another account†—in which the legend is very fully gone into—fixes the place of origin at Strood, “near Rochester.” This additional variant says that while St. Austin was preaching here the men of Stroud affixed tails of fishes to their hinder parts and wagged them in derision. As a punishment, all of that tribe were afterwards born with tails.

In its time of currency, this aspersion upon the fair name and fame of our ancient inhabitants, was the source of a wide-spread and grievous prejudice. For, says Lambard, it caused “Kentish men to bee at home merrily mocked . . . and in foreigne countries abroad earnestly flawted with this dishonourable note, in so much that many believe as verily that we be monsters and have tailles by nature.”

It is comforting to note that our good old perambulator entirely discredits this story, and derides Virgil for that “he laieth the infamous revenge upon our men of Kent.” Lambarde furthermore remarks of this writer that he “observed not the Hystorians law ‘that he shoulde be bolde to tell the trueth and yet not so bolde as to tell a lye.’” “Howbeit,” concludes our quaint old Kentish Historian . . . . . “his hystorie, in places not blemished with suche folies, is a worthie worke but . . . . . hee must of the wiser sorte be read over with greate suspicion.”

Every Stroodite will agree that the suspicion referred to may with advantage be well observed in the present instance.

As an addition to the pious hope of the writer in the *Golden Legend*, it will comfort the reader to learn, on the experience of the writer—who has on various occasions bathed in the Medway with scores of Strood boys—that our “future citizens” bore no evidence of any such caudal appendage ; a very satisfactory

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\* *Golden Legend*.

† *Arch. Cant.*, Vol. ix., pp. 126-8.

proof that if the curse ever did exist, the wrath of Saint Thomas has abated, or the pestilent infliction has worked itself out.\*

"The Kentish men of old were sayd to have tayls, because trafficking in the Low Countries they never paid full payments of what they did owe, but still left some part unpaid."†

We judge this version to have derived its libellous application from the older account.

There is, however, a moral to the story, which may, possibly, serve to restrain the infliction of such playful tricks upon passing visitors in future; or to operate against the docking of horses' tails generally. Should it also serve the additional purpose of reducing the rather too exuberant "language of the street" in our little town, it will be a grateful and distinct advantage, for the latter is frequently of such a character that

"Not a bystander who hears what is said,  
 "But listens to all such expressions with dread,  
 "And feels all his hair stand on end on his head."

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\* About the year 1438, an Italian prelate named Æneas Sylirus Piccolomini, who was afterwards raised to the papal throne as Pius II., visited England on a mission. The story of his visit is told in Milman's *History of Latin Christianity*, vol. viii., pp. 417-421. He did what many travellers have failed to do, he noted the objects of interest in the various places through which he passed, and he saw "a village where men were said to be born with tails." The Rev. Sparrow Simpson, in noticing this makes the remark that "unfortunately he has not set down its name," but, doubtless, as he followed the usual route from the Continent, viz., Sandwich, Canterbury, Sittingbourne, Maidstone, Rochester, Gravesend, to London, the place alluded to must be Strood.—*Notes & Queries*, 8th S., VIII., 381; IX., 157.

† Morison: *Itinerary*, 1666. Part 3, pp. 53-149.

## CHAPTER XII.

### STROOD MANORS.

"Give me the map there,  
Of all these bounds, even from this line to this,  
We make thee lady."—*"King Lear," Shakespeare.*

"Buy thee some place of lordship in the country, that, growing weary of playing, thy money may then bring thee to dignity and reputation."—*Ratse's Ghost 1605.*

### TEMPLE MANOR.

THE Manor House of Temple is situated on the west bank of the Medway, and lies south of the High Street. It is a highly



EAST VIEW OF TEMPLE MANOR.

*From an Old Print.*

interesting old building, and has played no unimportant part in the past history of our little town. It was founded in 1160, and in the time of Odo, Bishop of Bayeaux, it appertained to the Bishop of Rochester.\*

Hasted says "Stroud, *alias* Temple Manor, is situated within

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\* *Arch. Cant.*, Vol. xxii., pp. 251-2.



the Hundred of Shamel, and was given by King Henry II. to the Knights Templars,\* who had a mansion, great part of which is still remaining, [*i.e.*, in 1788] and which, from their possessing it, has since acquired the name of Temple Manor."

"This gift was confirmed† to them by King John and King Henry III., but the whole Order of them being dissolved in the 6th year of Edward's reign, 1312, Pope Clement V. immediately granted their lands and goods to the Knights Hospitallers, and the King afterwards confirmed that grant, and ordered possession to be delivered to them; though he, both before and afterwards, granted several of their manors and estates to laymen and lay uses, which induced Pope John XXII., 1322 (when he confirmed the Templars' lands to the Hospitallers), to denounce curses and excommunications against those nobles, knights, and other laymen, and even ecclesiastics, who, against right, were possessed of them."

This Bull probably accounts for an Act of Parliament passed the next year, in which the King, nobles, and others then assembled, granted that all such estates should be assigned, as had been intended by the donors, "to godly and pious uses," and under the assumption that this fraternity came within this description, "they were accordingly by it given to the Hospitallers. . . ." This manor accordingly became part of the possessions of the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem.

King Edward III. afterwards conferred it upon "his dear kinswoman" Mary de St. Paul, Countess of Pembroke, for her life only. He afterwards confirmed it upon her "and her heirs for ever," in consideration of her care of his daughter, the Princess Joan of Woodstock; and also in recompense of certain lands belonging to her which he had taken into his hands. This Countess was "daughter of a French noble, Guy de Chastillon, Count of St. Paul. On the day of her wedding to Aymer de Valance, Earl of Pembroke, in 1323, a tournament was held in honour of the event: at this tournament the bridegroom was slain. The young bride, who became in one day both wife and widow, came over to England and lived in widowhood for more than 50 years. Among her husband's lands, which became hers by dower, was the Manor of Wickham in Strood and Cuxton. . . . She thus became

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\* It "was given in the 11th year of King Henry III. to the Knights Templars."

† *Ibid.* Vol. III., 8vo. p. 548.

possessed of two manors within this parish. . . . She founded Pembroke College in Cambridge, . . . and the Monastery of Denny (in the same county). She is also believed to have re-built the church of Milton-next-Gravesend, where her husband, Aymer de Valance, founded a chantry or college. From her husband's father, Sutton Valence received its second name. The poet sings of the youthful and widowed Countess as

"Sad Chastillon, on her bridal morn  
That wept her bleeding love."\*

"This manor continued in the possession of the above monastery till the general dissolution of it in the reign of King



WEST VIEW OF TEMPLE MANOR.

*From an Old Print, 1767.*

Henry VIII., when it was, with the rest of the possessions of it, surrendered into the King's hands, and confirmed to him and his heirs by the general words of the Act of the 32nd year of that reign."†

It was, the same year, granted to Edward Elrington, and by Elrington and his wife Grace again disposed of ere the close of the year to George Brooke, Lord Cobham, and his heirs. Lord Cobham's grandson Henry, being convicted of high treason in the 1st year of King James I., had pardon of his life but lost his possessions. This manor was confirmed to the Crown in 1606.

\* *Strood in the Olden Time.*

† *Hasted, Vol. III., p. 549, 8vo.*

Soon afterwards it was granted to Sir Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, who had married a sister of Henry Brooke, Lord Cobham. He died in 1612, and left it to his only son, William, Earl of Salisbury, who alienated it to Bernard Hyde, Esq., of London; and he, upon his decease, gave it to his third son, John, who passed it away by sale to James Stuart, Duke of Richmond, in the reign of King Charles I. Shortly afterwards it passed to —. Blague, of Rochester.\* His son Isaac died possessed of it, leaving it to his widow; she afterwards married a Mr. John Lamport, after whose death it again reverted to the Blagues, one of whom alienated to Mr. John Whittaker, whose nephew, Thomas Whittaker, Esq., of Watringbury, is the present possessor.† [*i.e.*, 1718.] This family still retain it.

“Soon after the accession of John’s son, King Henry III., he was brought into relation with Strood. He confirmed to the Knights Templars the gift of Strood Manor, which King John had granted them. His charter of confirmation was given in 1226-27, and relics of the Templars’ Manor house, erected at that time, remain in a perfect state at this moment. The manor was one of importance. The Hundred Roll of 1274 mentions 32 of its principal tenants as men of Strode, who were withdrawn by the Templars from doing suit and service in the Hundred Court of the City of Rochester. The ancient portion still existing is a handsomely vaulted early English crypt, of the time of John or Henry III. It is about 40 feet long, 16 feet broad, and from 12 feet to 14 feet high. The vaulting, in three bays, is skilfully formed of small squared blocks of chalk, but the vaulting ribs are of stone, simply chamfered on each edge. They spring from round columns, three feet high, each of which supports three vaulting ribs. The caps and bases are round, but plain, having each a wide chamfer in lieu of any moulding. The crypt is entered by descending four or six steps. Its small windows, three on each side, are high up in the walls, but their long sloping sills are splayed nearly to the ground. Each window is in the centre of an arch, between two vaulting shafts, and has for its heading a thick flat slab of oak, nearly as wide as the thickness of the wall. A similar slab forms the top of the doorway by which we enter the crypt. The rest of the existing farm house seems to have been erected in the 16th or 17th century. This crypt is the only relic of the Templars’ house. It may have been the basement beneath a chapel, or it may more probably have been surmounted by the great hall of the house. In the reign of Edward III. the manor was valued by one of the King’s Eschætors, who says it was worth £34 7s. 10½d. per annum: a large sum in those days, and equivalent to more than

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\* Thomas Blague, installed Dean of Rochester, 1591; and Rector of Bangor in 1604.—Wood: *Fasti Oxoniensis*, Vol. II., p. 222.

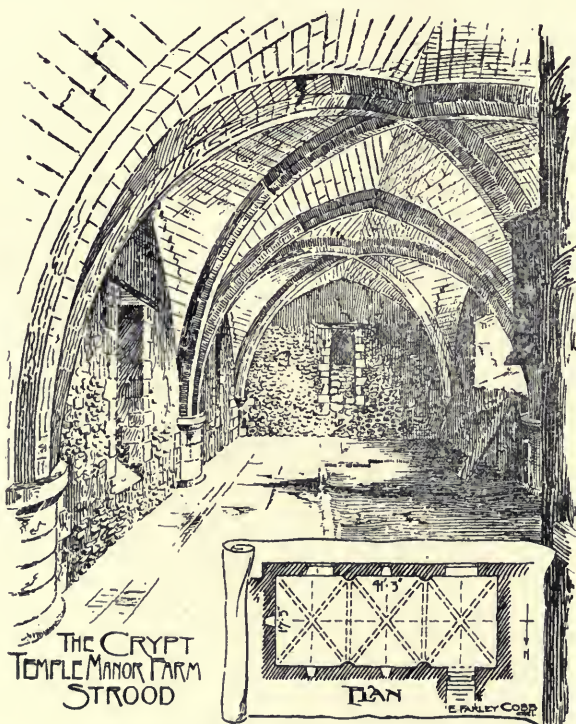
†, *Ibid.*

£400 a year of our money. The buildings are described as a capital messuage (or manor house) with a farm house, a barn, a chapel, and other houses annexed. There were two water mills under one roof, and two gardens containing two acres of land.”\*

The preceding illustration shows its pastoral situation in 1767.

#### ORIGIN OF “THE THREE CRUTCHES.”

“About a mile from the town of Rochester, on the banks of the river, are the remains of a building formerly called the



From a Drawing by E. Farley Cobb.

Temple, which belonged to the Knights Templars, and where they lived in grim state at the time that Order flourished in England.

“The village of Luddesden, at a short distance from the river, and on the road to Cobham Park, is connected with an old legend of the Medway and the ruins of the Temple above mentioned. When the Knights Templars flourished in all their glory, one of their members, Sir Reginald Braybrooke, had been to visit the Lord Cobham, and was returning to the Temple by a

\* Scott-Robertson, *Olden Strood*.



lonely path on the river's brink, when he was pierced to the heart by an arrow from a hand unseen. Next morning he was found weltering in his blood, quite dead, and the fatal arrow still sticking in his side. The Templars used every means to discover the assassin, but in vain; and in commemoration of the deed, and to solicit the prayers of all faithful passengers for the soul of their brother, they erected a triangular monument on the spot where the corpse was found, with a cross on each side, fronting the three roads that united at this place. The spot ever afterwards obtained the name of the Three Crosses. The murderer was not discovered during his own lifetime; but the secret was brought to light in a singular manner.

"On one bitterly cold winter night, some years afterwards, one of the brethren, who had been to administer the last consolations of religion to an expiring sinner, arrived at Luddesden in a woeful plight from cold and exhaustion. He saw but one light, from the window of a poor hovel in the village, and, knocking at the door, he entered to solicit shelter and a seat by the fire. He found the place inhabited but by one poor old woman, who was sick in bed. She was almost in the last extremities, and the instant the ecclesiastic entered, he remarked that the coverlet of her bed was no other than the cloak of the murdered Sir Reginald Braybrooke, whose confessor he had been. He immediately conjured her, ere she hastened into the presence of her God, to tell whether she knew anything of the murder. She then confessed that her husband, an old soldier, who had fancied himself wronged and insulted by Sir Reginald, had shot the fatal arrow to his heart; that after the commission of the deed he never enjoyed one moment's repose or happiness, and that one morning, a few months afterwards, he was found at the bottom of the chalk pit dashed to pieces. She did not know whether this catastrophe was accidental, or whether in a fit of remorse he had put an end to his miserable life. Having made this confession she expired, and the priest, taking away the cloak, conveyed it to the Temple, where it was long preserved by the Knights as a sad relic of their brother.

"The precise spot where the monument stood is not now known, all traces of it having long since disappeared. A small public house in the neighbourhood has borrowed a name from it, with a most whimsical perversion. From Three Crosses, the original name of the monument, it was corrupted in the course of time to the Three Crowches; and a modern landlord, seeing no meaning in these words, improved it, and made it more intelligible to his customers, by giving his house the sign of the 'Three Crutches.' Close to this house, on a rising ground over-shadowed by one of the largest walnut trees in England, is the spring that formerly supplied the pilgrims to this spot with water."\*

The explanation lies probably in the following—

*Crouch*, a cross (from the Latin *crux*). That all cross-roads

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\* From *Reminiscences of Old Rochester*.



had formerly a cross of wood or stone near the intersection, is pretty clear from the names still retained—as John's Cross, Mark Cross, Stone Cross, High Cross, Hand Cross, New Cross, Wych Cross (perhaps so named in honour of St. Robert de la Wych, Bishop of Chichester). All these and many others occur in Sussex. [These crosses served also for direction posts. Probably this was their primary use, the religious idea being an afterthought.] At Seaford such a spot bears the name of "the Crouch." We find also High Crouch, Katty's Crouch [St Katherine's], Fair Crouch, Crow Crouch, &c., &c. Crouched or Crutched Friars were an order of religion, who bore a cross upon their robes. The name *crutch* applied to the supports used by cripples is evidently from the same root. A person dwelling near some wayside cross would feel proud of such an appellation as *John atte Crouch*, a form in which the name frequently occurs. *Croucher* is another form of the word.\*

Nicholas atte Crouch was concerned in Wat Tyler's rising.†  
See Richard at the Cross, A.D. 1263.‡

There was a Robert ad Crucem in Newchurch, 1360.§

This last—pronounced *Cru-chem*—shews the transition form.

This narrative, in its application to the inn concerned, is open to doubt. It is difficult to conjecture "the lonely path on the river's brink . . . fronting three roads that united at this place," leading from Luddesdown to the Temple. Again, it is rather a far cry that a murder at a spot so far removed from the "Three Crutches" inn on Cobham Road, should give rise to its name. The writer has also been informed that the anterior name of the "Three Crutches" inn was "The Bear and Ragged Staff." His informant was an old lady, now dead, who was born there.

"Knight's Place," the residence of Mr. Pye, adjacent, takes its name from the fact that those lands were formerly a possession of the Knights Templars of Strood.

By the courtesy of Messrs. Hoare, Howlett, and Tatham, the writer has been enabled to examine the Temple Manor Court Roll for 4th May, 1772.

JAMES HULKES,	}	Homage Sworn.
WM. BATCHELOR,		
JOHN MAIDEN,		

From this Court Roll it appears that "The Gun" inn was,

\* Lower: *English Surnames*. Vol. I., pp. 72-3.

† *Arch. Cant.*, Vol. III., pp. 69-70-75.

‡ *Ibid.*, Vol. IV., p. 311.

§ *Ibid.*, Vol. XIII., p. 465.

for a period, called by the sign of "The Prince of Wales,"\* and then reverted again to its older sign, by which it is known to-day. The freehold at this date belonged to the Gotther family.

There is also mentioned the "Crooked Barn by the Roadside in Strood," to which premises "newly built" had been added.

Three acres of land in "Townsend Close" in Strood is named, James Rondeau being the freeholder; and "The Duke of Gloucester's Head" is in the possession of William Boucher,



WEST FRONT (PRESENT DAY) TEMPLE MANOR.

*From a Photo by A. G. Blackman.*

whilst John Hampden and James Beresford hold the "Dolphin," "now laid into one and called the 'Windmill.'" The name of Hester Tranah also occurs as a freeholder of the manor.

Valuable evidence arises as to change of inn signs. We have the "Mitre and Sun"—afterwards a baker's shop, and now called the "Dolphin."

"A messuage newly built, and formerly the sign of the 'Flower de Luce,' " late in the occupation of —. Alexander.

Also a tenement, described as on a piece of land 23 feet in front and 130 feet backwards to "Crooked Barn fronting the Street towards the North and adjoining Great Ditch towards the South." The Morland family, in the person of one Christopher, held land in this manor at this Court Baron.

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\* See also chapter on "Inns of Strood."

We have also noted a "messuage and tenement, late the 'Goat,'" now in the occupation of Jacob Harvey.

"An acre of land South of Tapley's malthouse, now in the occupation of John Goldston."

Lastly, a "messuage or tenement called 'Spittle House,'" which James Tapley sold to John Knight, and the latter sold it again to John Goldstone.

Undoubtedly this is a reference, possibly the latest, to our Leper Hospital at Strood Hill. Near to the old malthouse—[see the sketch by Mr. W. H. Reynolds, page 144]—West of the house under the tree, some very old brick and chalk work was revealed in the process of demolition. Its condition was too fragmentary to hazard an opinion upon.

#### MANOR OF GODDINGTON.

Part of the Manor of Goddington lies in the parish of Strood, the larger portion being in Frindsbury. "In the 20th year of King Edward III., Simon Goddington paid aid for this manor at half a Knight's fee. It afterwards came, in the time of Charles II., into the possession of the Wattons, and from them to 'Francis Barrell, Esq., Recorder of the City of Rochester.' He was elected to serve in Parliament in the 31st year of King Charles II., and, dying in 1679, he was buried in Rochester Cathedral, as were his several descendants." The mansion was rebuilt by Mr. Thomas Ayres, about 1780. From his niece, Mary Hopkins, it was purchased by George Gunning, Esq.\* At the South-west corner of the garden of Goddington House the brickwork is of ancient date. Formerly there stood at this spot an old inn known as the "Black Lion"; at this inn the Frindsbury Parochial Officials of that day transacted the parish business.

#### MANOR OF BONCAKES, *ALIAS* NEWARK.

This is a very ancient manor, which had owners of the name of Boncakes as early as the reign of King John, as is shown by a law-suit at this time "for the land of Pinendene in Strodes, parcel of this manor."

"In the 20th year of King Edward III. this manor seems to have been divided among several owners: as at the installation

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\* *Hasted*, Vol. VIII., p. 537.

as a knight of the Black Prince, in that year, the Master of the Newark or Hospital of Stroud, the heirs of Richard Gromyn, John, the son of William Prior, of Stroud, and the heirs of Simon de Cokeford, paid respectively aid for one quarter of a knight's fee, which the said Master, Robert Frankelyn, and Nicholas de Cokesford before held in Stroud of Simon de Chellesfield, and he of the Earl of Leicester."

In the 43rd year of King Edward III., James Peckham released to Richard Havekyn, of Stroud, the third part of a certain Court, called Frankelyne's Court, held most probably from the before-mentioned Robert Frankelyne, together with all rents, suits of courts, services, and appurtenances arising from certain tenements in Stroud and Frindsbury, which court and rents once belonged to Hamon Baker, of Stroud.\*

This manor, upon the establishment of Newark Hospital, became part of the possessions of that Charity. At its suppression in the 31st year of Henry VIII., it was given to the Priors and Convent of Rochester. It stayed in their hands but a few months, as the next year that also was dissolved and its possessions surrendered to the King; to be again given, in the year following, to the newly-created Dean and Chapter of Rochester, in whose possession it continued until the year 1866, when it passed, with nearly all the other estates of the Dean and Chapter (except those in the immediate neighbourhood of the Cathedral) to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England.

Much of the property on the North side of the High Street of Strood is within this manor, including the "Angel" inn. On the South side it apparently claims the Conservative Club (upon which site in olden days stood an ancient inn known as the "King's Head"), and the adjacent properties fronting Messrs. Budden and Biggs' brewery. A good portion of North Street, including the "Three Gardeners," is also in this manor.

There are likewise references to a "brew-house," and to lands formerly called "Terrys, Plays, and Cates."

A gentleman who formerly attended this court informs me that the Manorial Court was held at a house in Newark Yard. At each court buns were supplied by a pastrycook of Rochester, at the cost of the Dean and Chapter, the Lords of the Manor. Those who attended, whether for themselves or others, were invited to take a bun. Following is a copy of the Roll of the

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\* *Hasted*, Vol. III., p. 551.

# MANOR OF BONCAKES OR NEWARK.

A Court Baron was held by Joseph Brooke, Esqre, Steward to the Dean and Chapter (Lords of this Manor), on Saturday, 3 October, 1761.

No. on the Roll.	Name of Tenant.	Parcels of the Estate—Where lying, and how bounded.	Names of Occupiers.	Yearly Rent.
1	Isaac Jones, in right of Eleanor his wife, and John Boreman, in right of his wife.	Messuage and garden in Strood, part of greenhouse, formerly Isaac Beckes . . . hold by fealty suit of three weeks to three weeks, and rendering a year's rent for relief upon every death and alienation.	John Stone. William Boreman.	£ s. d. 0 1 6
2	Matthew Peneson.	For two new-built brick messuages, ground, and appts.; late Edmund Pearson, and before Thomas Gibbs.	The Widow Alexander and the Widow Castle-ton.	0 1 6
3	The Heirs of John Goodhugh.	Two tenements in Strood, part of greenhouse; late Mr. Samuel Gibson.	John Taylor.	0 2 10½
4	Nathaniel Hood.	For a tenement in Strood, with appts.	Own Occupier.	0 0 4
5	William Batchelor.	For two tenements in Strood.	Own Occupier.	0 1 11
6	The same.	For a tenement in Strood, called "The King's Head."	John Prescott.	0 4 0



*Manor of Boncaves or Newark.—Continued.*

No. on the Roll.	Name of Tenant.	Parcels of the Estate—Where lying, and how bounded.	Names of Occupiers.	Yearly Rent.
7	Hannah and Maria Hoad.	Two tenements and appts. in Strood. [H. and M. Hoad sold this to Thomas Bigg "since dyed."—See page 21.]	Hunt, and Solomon Newman.	£ s. d. 0 0 7
8	The same.	For land, formerly called Terrys, in Strood, whereon several tenements were formerly built.		0 0 6
9	James Bingham.	Message and appts. in Strood, late Elizabeth Hands.	Samuel Downes.	0 0 7
10	Richard Drinkwater, in right of — his wife.	Message and garden, with appts., in Strood; late Longley's, before William Pemble's and Mrs. Taylor's.	William Childs.	0 1 4
11	Walter Harris, Esqr.	For a tenement in Little Borough, in Strood; formerly Thomas Plays.	— Simmonds, widow.	0 0 9
12	The same.	For message, garden, and ground, with appts., in Strood; the message lately new built; formerly Thomas Plays.	John Hopper.	0 0 8

13	The same.	For a messuage in the High Street, and seven other tenements behind the said tenements, with the several gardens and grounds thereto belonging, in Strood, in a place there called Playes Alley.	George Maizeday. Widow Benfield. Finnes Lowry. Sarah Dunnings. William Page, jun.	0 1 0
14	James Hulkes.	For a tenement with the appts., in Little Borough, in Strood.	John Randall.	0 0 6
15	James Tapley.	For a tenement in Little Borough, in Strood, called the Red Lyon; late John Crisp's.	John Randall.	0 5 6
16	William Walker Hill, Esqr., and Mary his wife.	For two tenements in Strood; formerly Michael Randall's and heretofore Shimmer's.	John Thomas. Widow Roberts. Thomas Day.	0 1 0
17	Richard Turner.	For a tenement in Strood, with appts., part a smith's forge.	Nathaniel Hood. Widow Jackson.	0 0 4
18	The same.	For a tenement in Strood, adjoining eastward to the last.	Edward Streater. — Williams.	0 0 4
19	Thomas Elliott.	A toft whereon heretofore four tenements stood, but now a brick warehouse is built thereon, with the appts., in Strood; formerly Mrs. Weekes. [Purchased from Messers. Curtis and Pickering, and William Boreman.]	In his own occupation.	0 2 6
20a	James Bingham.	Tenement and appts.; late Mrs. Scott's. [Purchased of James Parsons.]	John Masters.	0 0 4½

*Manor of Boncakes and Newark.—Continued.*

No. on the Roll.	Name of Tenant.	Parcels of the Estate—Where lying, and how bounded.	Names of Occupiers.	Yearly Rent.
20b	Susannah Brookes.	Tenement, etc.; late Mrs. Scott's. [“Thomas Brookes dyed.” His widow succeeds.]	Susannah Brooke.	£ s. d. 0 0 4½
21	The Heirs of Walter Weekes.	Two tenements, etc., in Little Borough; formerly William Burford's.	John Hayler. Benjamin Hayler.	0 0 6
22	The same.	For a tenement in Little Borough, in Strood, formerly called Cates; several years since made two dwelling houses, with the round-about smith's forge, stables, gardens, grounds, and appts.; formerly Thomas Burford's. [NOTE.—This refers to the piece of land forming junction, North Street—Gun Lane.]	William Boreman, blacksmith; and John Anderson.	0 3 0
23	The same.	Messuage, garden, and appts., in Strood, in Dutcherry Borough, heretofore called the Five Bells; formerly the said Burford's.	Abraham Hosmer.	0 0 6½
24	Thomas Paschale.	Tenement, with appts.; late Thomas Paschale's.	Richard Moyse.	0 1 1
25a	John Withey.	For three tenements; late Robert Withey's, heretofore recovered by him by law against Jane Curson.	John Rogers. John Ffranks. Henry Davidge.	0 1 4

25b	Cornelius Norton.	Two tenements; late John Withey's, before Robert Withey's.	Alexander Bridge. William Allen.	0 2 0
26	Richard Lucy and Sarah his wife, and Joseph Blundell and Mary his wife.	Parcel of marsh land, containing half-an-acre, lying behind a messuage, formerly called the Saracen's Head, which land is enclosed with a ditch; heretofore in the occupation of Samuel Starks Miller, formerly the estate of Jarvis Maplesden, before the estate of the heirs of John Pitcher, late John Berrisford, uncle of the said Sarah and Mary.	William Stephens.	0 1 6
27	William Troward and Richard Troward.	For a tenement called Peter's Place, near the Gun, in Strood. [Richard Ironmonger "dyed seized of these tenements." They were devised to his wife, with remainder to William and Richard Troward.]	John Boghurst.	0 7 0
28	George Lawley, Esqr.	For several tenements and gardens in Little Borough; . . formerly Obadiah Peterson's; part of the houses now in ruins.	James Bingham.	0 8 0
29	Robert Bragge and Robert Lathropp, Esqrs.	For a messuage; formerly in occupation of James Tapley.	David Strutfield.	0 2 0
30	The same.	Lands; late Baynard's.	David Strutfield.	0 0 8
31	The same.	Tenement; formerly in occupation of Mrs. Blake, widow.	David Strutfield.	0 0 9
32	The same.	For part of the Green House, in Strood, now adjoining.	David Strutfield.	0 2 8

## MANOR OF NORTHWOOD YOKE.

This is a small Manor in Strood. Its lands, and the tenants occupying the same,—date, 1773—with the attendant quit rents, are shown in the following Court Roll.

Manor of Northwood Yoke	} To Wit	The Court Baron of Mrs. Mary Thorntun, Lady of the Manor aforesaid, holden on Monday, the eighth day of November, in the 14th year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Third, by the Grace of God of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King Defender of the Faith, and so forth, in the year of our Lord 1773, at the accustomed place before William Twopeny, Gentleman, Steward, there according to custom.
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Homage	{	Henry Green, Foreman,	}	Sworne	[ <i>Form of the Oath.</i> ]
		Thomas Strover,			
		John Goldston.			

“All manner of Persons that do owe suit and service to this Court Baron, now to be holden in and for this Manor—Draw near and give your attendance and answer to your names.”

Assessors	{	}
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No.	Names of Tenants now Seized.	The Parcels of the Estate, where lying, how bounded, with the Names, Descriptions, etc.	Names of the Occupiers.	Annual Rent.	Alienations presented at this Court, as by descent, or purchase, and admissions, orders and reliefs, etc., due or paid.
1	Jane Clarke, an infant, by John Hick, gentleman, her guardian	Holdeth of the Lady as of her Manor aforesaid a messuage, with the appurtenances thereof on the North-east side of the High Street in Strood by fealty Suit of Court, from three weeks to three weeks, and rendering one year's rent for a relief upon every death and alienation, and by the yearly rent of eleven pence.	John Wallis	£ s. d. 11	The Homage aforesaid upon their oaths present that since last court Jane Clark attained her age of twenty one years and thereupon aliened these premises No. 1, to John Flick, who hath since alienated the same to Thomas Taylor, whereupon two years rent became due to the Lady for two reliefs. And the said Thomas Taylor appearing in court, paid the said reliefs and the arrears of quit rent and was admitted tenant.
2	John Simmons.	A piece of land containing about three acres, lying at a place called Salters Cross in Strood, and being part of the land known by the name of Salters Cross by the Services aforesaid, and yearly rent of twenty-two	John Goldston In money In lieu of two hens and 20 eggs.	1 10 8 2 6	Also they present that since last court John Knight became seized of these premises No. 2, from John Simmons or his heir, or devise, whereupon one year's rent became due to the Lady for a relief. And that the said John Knight hath since aliened the premises to John Goldston, whereupon another year's rent became due to the

*Manor of Northwood Yoke.—Continued.*

No.	Names of Tenants now Seized.	The Parcels of the Estate, where lying, how bounded, with the Names, Descriptions, etc.	Names of the Occupiers.	Annual Rent.	Alienations presented at this Court, as by descent or purchase, and admissions, orders and reliefs, etc., due or paid.
3	The heirs of the Duke of Richmond.	pense, two hens, and twenty eggs; together in money, two shillings and sixpense.  A piece of land lying at a place called Salters Cross in Strood, containing about two acres, being the residue of the land called Salters Cross by the Services aforesaid, and the yearly rent of one shilling and five pence.		£ s. d.  1 5	Lady for another relief. And the said John Goldston, appearing in Court, paid the said reliefs and arrears of quit rent and was admitted tenant and sworn of the Homage.
4	The Mayor and Citizens of Rochester.	A messuage and lands at Reed, in Strood, by the Services aforesaid, and yearly rent of ninepense, one hen, and eight eggs; together, one shilling and ninepense.	Boreman Widow  In money  In lieu of one hen & eight eggs.	9  1 0  1 9	

5	John Boghurst in right of Mary, his wife.	A parcel of land in Strood containing eight acres, more or less, now in one piece. Adjoining to Brompton Lane at one head, the other head adjoining to land now or late Francis Barrell, Esq., and South to lands the late of James Hulkes, now of Thomas Stevens, called the Angel Orchard, but now arable land, formerly Thomas Taylor by the Services aforesaid, and yearly rent of five shillings and eightpence.	In his own occupation.	0 5 8	
6	Samuel Hall.	Two tenements on the North-east side of the High Street, in Strood (formerly one dwelling house), and several small tenements behind the same, formerly Ellis's and afterwards Bourne's by the Services aforesaid, and yearly rent of fourpence halfpenny.	James Ward. Jane Russell, Spr. John Puckle, Collins, Roberts Widow, Robert Beresford,	0 0 4½	Also the Homage aforesaid further presented that Samuel Hall aliened these premises, No. 6, to Stephen Russell, whereupon one year's rent is due to the Lady for relief. And that the said Stephen Russell hath since died, seized thereof, whereupon another year's rent became due to the Lady for another relief. And that the said Stephen Russell by his will devised the premises to his three daughters,

*Manor of Northwood Yoke.—Continued.*

No.	Names of Tenants now Seized.	The Parcels of the Estate, where lying, how bounded, with the Names, Descriptions, etc.	Names of the Occupiers.	Annual Rent.	Alienations presented at this Court, as by descent or purchase, and admissions, orders and reliefs, etc., due or paid.
				£ s. d.	
7	Susanna Burgis, Spinr.	A parcell of land called Mill Hill, containing about acres, lying in Strood, near a farm there called Reed Farm, formerly Punnett's by the Services aforesaid, and yearly rent of two shil-	Boreman Widow.  In money  In lieu of 2 hens and 22 eggs.	0 2 2  0 2 1½ <hr/> 0 4 3½	Mary wife of James Ward, Elizabeth Russell and James Russell, spinsters. And that the said Elizabeth hath since married with John Gasser, whereupon one-third of another year's rent is become due to the Lady for a relief, and the said James Ward, John Gasser and Jane Russell appearing in Court by James Twopeny, jun., their agent, paid the said relief and arrears of quit rent, and were admitted tenants, viz., the said James Ward and John Gasser in the right of their respective wife, and the said Jane Russell in her own right.

8	George Lawley, Esq.	A piece of land in Strood containing about seven acres, formerly an orchard, now part hop-ground, and the remainder arable adjoining to the road leading from Spittle Hill to the three Crouches by the Services aforesaid, and by the yearly rent of two shillings and eightpence.	John Goldston.	0 2 8	lings and twopence, two hens, and twenty - two eggs; together in money, four shillings and threepence halfpenny.
9	Robert Daniel.	Two pieces of land now or heretofore called Culverhouse Crofts, in Frindsbury, containing about ten acres, one parcell of which lyeth about South-west to the road leading to Mockbeggar and adjoining Mr. Cart's land, called the Black Lands, and the other	In his own occupation.	0 8 0	



*Manor of Northwood Yoke.—Continued.*

No.	Names of Tenants now Seized.	The Parcels of the Estate, where lying, how bounded, with the Names, Descriptions, etc.	Names of the Occupiers.	Annual Rent.	Alienations presented at this Court, as by descent or purchase, and admissions, orders and reliefs, etc., due or paid.
		parcell thereof is now or formerly was divided into three parts and lyeth on the other side of the said road, by the service aforesaid, and yearly rent of eight shillings.		£ s. d.	
10	William and Richard Troward. . . .	A piece of land now and for many years last past a cherry orchard, containing four acres, more or less, formerly in the occupation of Thomas and David Strutfield, but now of John Thorpe. formerly called the Chequer, lying in Strood (near the Church lands of the Lord of this manor called the Chequers), heretofore Yates, late Ironmongers, and formerly Cart's, by the	John Hopper.	0 3 5½	

11	The Revd. Mr. Parfect.	Service aforesaid, and by yearly rent of three shillings and fivepence halfpenny.	Finch.	o o 11	Also the Homage aforesaid further present that since last Court the Rev. Caleb Parfect, Clerke, died, seized of these premises, No. 11, whereupon one year's rent is become due to the Lady for a relief. And that the said Caleb Parfect, by his Will, devised the premises to his daughter, Martha Parfect, spinster, who, appearing in Court by William Twopeny, Jun., her agent, paid the said relief and arrears of quit rent, and was admitted tenant.
12	Ann Keble, widow.	A message with the Ap- purtenances on the North-east side of the High Street in Strood, late Phillips, by the ser- vice aforesaid and yearly rent of four pence half- penny.	Richard Skinner.	o o 4½	Also they present that since last Court Ann Keble, widow, died, seized of these premises, No. 12, . . . whereupon one year's rent became due to the Lady for a relief, and upon her death the premises are come unto John Phillips, her son, who, appearing in Court by Richard Skinner, his tenant, paid his relief and arrears of quit rent and was admitted tenant.

*Manor of Northwood Yoke.—Continued.*

No.	Names of Tenants now Seized.	The Parcels of the Estate, where lying, how bounded, with the Names, Descriptions, etc.	Names of the Occupiers.	Annual Rent.	Alienations presented at this Court, as by descent or purchase, and admissions, orders and reliefs, etc., due or paid.
13	Thomas Burrell in right of Elizabeth, his wife	A messuage with the appts. on the North-East side of the High Street, in Strood; by the services aforesaid and the yearly rent of threepence half-penny.	Abraham Lloyd.	£ s. d. 0 0 3½	The Homage aforesaid present that since last Court, Thomas Burrell, who was seized of these premises No. 13, in right of Elizabeth his wife, departed this life, whereupon one year's rent became due to the Lady for relief, and that the said Thomas in his lifetime and Elizabeth his wife mortgaged and conveyed the said premises to Elizabeth Stanly, widow, whereupon another year's rent became due to the Lady for another relief; and that the said Elizabeth Stanly hath since intermarried with Thomas Weston, whereupon another year's rent is become due for another relief, and that the said Thomas Weston and Elizabeth his wife are (mortgagee) in possession of the said premises, and the said Thomas Wilson and Elizabeth his wife appearing in Court, by John Tress, their agent, paid the said reliefs and quit rent and were admitted tenants.

14	Henry Green in right of Alice, his wife.	Four messuages with their appts. on the North East side of the High Street, in Strood, heretofore Bournes, by the services aforesaid, and by the yearly rent of ninepense.	In his own occupation and of Nathaniel Watson, William Bladon and William Rufford.	0 9
15	Ellen Creswell, widow.	A piece of land in Strood with the appts. formerly called Black Bush, now lying on the right hand side of the High Road leading from Strood to Spittle Hill and over against the building late called Mr. Tapley's, but now Mr. Goldston's Malt-house on the other side of the road, and butts and heads to the Gun Orchard there, and side to land there, now or late of Francis Barrell, Esqre., by the service aforesaid and by the yearly rent of tenpence, one hen and ten eggs, together in lieu one shilling and tenpence halfpenny.	<p>In money</p> <p>In lieu of one hen and ten eggs.</p> <p>Strutfield, widow, or William Jenkinson her under tenant.</p>	<p>0 10½</p> <p>1 0</p> <p>1 10½</p>

They also present that since last Court Ellen Creswell, widow, who was seized of these premises No 15, died seized thereof, whereupon the premises come unto Ellen Creswell, spinster, who hath intermarried with Thomas Strover, whereupon two years' rent became due to the Lady for two reliefs; and that the said Ellen is since dead, and thereupon the said Thomas Strover is become seized of the premises in his own right, whereupon another year's rent is become due to the Lady for another relief, and the said Thomas Strover appearing in Court paid the said reliefs and arrears of quit rent, and was admitted tenant and sworn of the Homage.

*Manor of Northwood Yoke.—Continued.*

No.	Names of Tenants now Seized.	The Parcels of the Estate, where lying, how bounded, with the Names, Descriptions, etc.	Names of the Occupiers.	Annual Rent.	Alienations presented at this Court, as by descent or purchase, and admissions, orders and reliefs, etc., due or paid.
16	The Heirs of Mr. Isaac Blake.	A piece of land containing one acre lying at a place called Temple Cross, in Strood; by the services aforesaid and yearly rent of sixpence and eleven eggs, together in money eightpence three farthings.	In money In lieu of eggs	<div> <div>£ s. d.</div> <div>0 6</div> </div> <div> <div>0 2½</div> <hr/> <div>0 8½</div> </div>	

HENRY GREEN,  
JOHN GOLDSTON,  
THOMAS STROVER.

WILLIAM TWOPENY, Steward.



The four gentlemen mentioned sign this Roll.

The next Court is held 23rd November, 1785, twelve years having meanwhile elapsed. As the Roll deals always with the same lands and tenements, there is nothing to be gained by repetition, save to mention that changes in the proprietary occurred; notably is this the case in property No. 6, where a certain John Gasser, having married one of the heiresses to a one-third share of this messuage, the marriage is declared void, the girl being under age, Mr. Gasser also having "ran away and left her."

No. 7 has meanwhile been "aliened" to Samuel Nicholson, presumably the ancestor of the builder of Strood Church.

No mention being made of Martha Parfect, beyond the fact of her paying what is due, we are led to imagine that lady as still holding on to her Strood possession.

These two records are all the volume contains. It is worthy of note that Mrs. Mary Thornton, "the Lady of the Manor," had died in the interim (1779) of these two Courts being held, and that "the Rev. Samuel Denne, Clerk," was now "Lord" of Northwood Yoke. The new lord was a gifted man, an erudite scholar, and one of the most accomplished Kentish antiquarians of his day. He it was [see page 25] who virtually wrote *Fisher's History of Rochester*, Fisher taking but little part beyond that of obtaining subscribers, and doing what may be termed the "business" part of the production.

After Mr. Denne's death, the manor was sold to Mr. Isaac Sutton Cooper, of Finchley, Middlesex, who died in 1875.

The quit rents being of such little value, they have not been collected for many years.

## CHAPTER XIII

### VISITORS—FAMOUS AND INFAMOUS.

Marall: Sir, the man of honour's come  
Newly alighted—

Overreach: In without reply,  
And do as I command.—  
Is the loud music I gave order for  
Ready to receive him?—

*New Way to Pay Old Debts.*

ALTHOUGH Strood has always been under the shadow of Rochester, yet it must have witnessed many grand cavalcades pass along its High Street to and from London; doubtless the inns and the houses of the local magnates afforded hospitality to suites of distinguished travellers that overflowed the Bridge from the Cathedral City, as Stow mentions in his description of the embassy of Cardinal Wolsey, who, in 1527, passed through Strood on his way to negotiate peace between Henry VIII. and the King of France. After giving the names of knights, noblemen, and ecclesiastics of high rank numbering 900, he proceeds to describe

#### THE POMPOUS RIDING OF THE CARDINAL.

“Then marched hee forwards from his own house at Westminster, through London over London Bridge, having before him of Gentlemen a great number, three in a rank in velvet coates, and the most of them greate chaines of golde about their neckes; and all his Yeomen followed him, with Noblemen's and Gentlemen's servants, all in Orange tawney coates, with the Cardinal's Hatte, and a T. C., for Thomas Cardinal, embroidered upon all the coates, as well of his owne servantes as of all the rest of the Gentlemen's servants, and his sumpter mules, which were 20 or more, with all his carriage of carts, and other of his traine, were passed before. He rode like a Cardinal very sumptuously on his mule, with his spare mule and spare horse trapped in crimson velvet upon velvet, and stirrups gilt following him: and before him hee hadde his two great Crosses of silver, his two great Pillars of silver, the King's broad seale of England and his Cardinal's hat, and a gentleman carrying his valence, otherwise called his cloke bag, which was made of fine scarlett, altogether embrodied very richly with gold, haveing in it a cloake. Thus passed he forth through London, and all the way every day on his journey hee was thus furnished, haveing his

Harbengers in every place before, which prepared lodging for his traine.

The first journey that hee made, was two miles beyond Dertford in Kent, into Sir T. Wiltshire's house, and the rest of his traine were lodged in Dertford, and in the country thereabouts. The next day he marched to Rochester, where he was lodged in the Bishop's Palace, and the rest of his traine in the city and in Strowde. The third day he rode to Faversham, and there was lodged in the Abbey, and his traine in the towne there, and some in the country thereabout," &c., &c.\*

"The King's harbingers on journeys announced their coming by the blowing of horns, and owing to their exactions Bishop Islip says the sound was terrifying to him at home or at mass."†

That gloomy bigot, King Philip of Spain, passed through Strood in Lent, 1556, and hated though he doubtless was, the Churchwardens, probably moved by strong motives, had the bells

of Strood Church rung merrily on the occasion. For their loyal exertions the Strood ringers received 6d. Cardinal Pole also received the like homage in passing through our town. His eminence bestowed 6s. towards the parochial finances. Later in the same year, Queen Mary passed through Strood with her Spanish husband on his way to Dover (to Mary's great grief leaving her alone for a time), and once again our bells greeted the royal couple, this time producing a monetary recognition of 1s. 1d.



ROCHESTER BRIDGE IN THE COACHING DAYS.

\* Stow: *Annales of England*, pp. 532-3.

† *Harl. MSS.*, 6237.

Christian IV., King of Denmark, James I. and his Queen, and Prince Henry (1606), after a visit to Chatham Dockyard, were rowed up the river and landed "where on a hill very convenient they might overlooke the whole navie. There was ordayned places for them."\* Another account says "Windmill hill." This windmill (see Dr. Harris' view of Rochester, page 88) stood between the Quarry House and Frindsbury Church.

#### PRINCE HENRY'S VISIT TO CHATHAM DOCKYARD, 1611.

Phineas Pett quaintly describes this visit, stating that "about 9 of the clock His Highness came on board, where we were ready to receive him, after the sea manner, with trumpetts and drumms." After visiting, during the next two days, every ship, "taking particular and private information from Sir Robert Mansell and myself (none other suffered to come near)," the Prince "went up to Stroud by water," and from thence to Gravesend.

#### CHARLES I., 1631.

Phineas Pett thus records this visit :—

"Wednesday, being the 15 day of June, all the ships in the navy at Chatham being compleately trimmed in all poynts, rigged, and all the sails at yardes and ordnance on board, His Majesty, attended by diverse lordes, came to Stroude about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, where the officers of the navy attended His Highnesse with barges and boates, and being imbarked, rowed down the river on board the 'Prince,' and from her on board all the shippes rideing thereabouts. At His Majesty's imbarcking all the shippes did orderly discharge their ordnance. The King went to his lodgeing at the 'Crowne' in Rochester."

#### COSSUMA ALBERTUS, PRINCE OF TRANSYLVANIA.

"On the evening of Tuesday, October 15th, 1661, this Prince Cossuma was approaching Rochester in his chariot, attended by his coachman and footboy, when within a mile of Strood (and here I do not hesitate to lay the scene at the famous Gad's Hill, called by one of our previous travellers, that 'High Old Robbing Hill') the vehicle stuck fast in the mire; whereupon the Prince resolved to sleep in the coach, pulling off his coat and wrapping it about him to keep himself warm.

"Being fast asleep, his coachman, Isaac Jacob, a Jew, about midnight takes the Prince's hanger from under his head, and stabs him to the heart; and calling to his aid his companion —

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\* *Arch. Cant.*, Vol. VI., pp. 57-59.



whose name was Casimirus Karsagi—they both completed the tragedy by dragging him out of the carriage, cutting off his head and throwing the mutilated remains into a ditch near at hand. The two men, having possessed themselves of a large sum of money the Prince had about his person, then took the carriage and horses to Greenhithe, where they left them 'to be called for.' On the following Saturday, an arm of the murdered Prince was brought by a dog belonging to a doctor of physic at Rochester, who was riding by the spot, whereupon, search being made, the other remains were discovered.

"Not long afterwards, the Jew and the footboy were both taken in London, and being brought before the Lord Mayor, the footboy confessed the whole murder. They were tried at Maidstone Assizes before Sir Orlando Bridgman, and were sentenced to be executed—the coachman being hanged at the place where this horrible and cruel murder was committed. The Prince was buried with great solemnity in Rochester Cathedral."\*

"Rochester, 26 Octob. On Tuesday last (22<sup>d</sup>) the body of Cossuma Albertus, a Prince of Transilvania (which was most inhumanely murdered, robb'd, and mangled, in the parish of Strood . . .) was honourably interred in this place:—the manner thus—His body being brought to the parish of Strood, was accompanied from thence to the West door of the Cathedral Church of Rochester by the Prebendaries of the said church in their formalities, with the gentry and commonality of the said city and places adjacent, with torches before them. Near the cathedral they were met by the choir, who sung *Te Deum* before them; when divine service was ended, the choir went before the body to the grave (which was made in the body of the church) singing *Nunc Dimittis*. Thousands of people flockt to this cathedral, amongst whom many gave large commendations of the Dean and Chapter, who bestowed so honorable an interment on a stranger at their own proper costs and charges."†

"Rochester, Aug. 3. To-day, about 12 o'clock, the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough passed through this city; they were received with great expressions of joy from the people, especially those of Chatham, who strewed their way with flowers, as they had adorned their own houses with green boughs, and welcomed them with repeated shouts and acclamations. They were met about three miles from hence by Dr. Harris, one of our Prebendarys, the Minister of Chatham, and many other gentlemen of that place and of Rochester, on horseback. Dr. Harris made a short congratulatory speech; which the Duke return'd with all possible condescension and humanity."‡

Anciently possessed of two endowed hospitals, Strood, for its size, must in old times have won large favour in the pilgrim mind. More modern experiences, however—if the following

\* The "Mercurius Publicus" newspaper for October, 1661.

† *Arch. Cant.*, Vol. v., pp. 70-1-2.

‡ *The Flying Post*, 5 Aug., 1714.



effusion be accepted as a guide—is less comforting to our self-esteem. Seeing that the unflattering unction lies with equal heaviness upon our two eastern neighbours as it does upon ourselves, we are, therefore, the better supported in bearing the sarcasms of the writer's lampoons.

“The three towns of Stroud, Rochester, and Chatham join each other, and have proved a subject of wit for glass window bards and inn scribblers, time immemorial—as every wall, shutter, and casement in houses for public reception can testify. The following is the most humorous, said to have been written extempore, after a short residence in the neighbourhood.

#### THE PEOPLE OF STROUD.

“The people of *Stroud*,  
Talk long and talk loud,  
And herd in a croud,  
Traducing their innocent neighbours ;  
While envy by fits  
Mid the congress sits,  
Gives a whet to their wits,  
And smiles on their scandalous labours.  
This place, like an eel,  
Where the publicans steal,  
Is dirty, base, long, foul, and slippery ;  
And the belles flirt about,  
With their persons deck'd out,  
With run muslin, and second-hand frippery.

\* \* \* \*

“*Rochester's* a town  
Of specious renown,  
Full of tinkers and taylors,  
And slopmen and sailors,  
And magistrates who often blunder'd ;  
Coquettes without beauty,  
Old maids past their duty,  
And Venus' gay nymphs by the hundred.  
Vile inns without beds,  
And men without heads,  
By which poor Brittannia's undone ;  
Extortionate bills,  
Anti-venery pills,  
And *port* manufactur'd in London.  
Honest DICK WATTS of yore,  
Their good name to restore,  
Decreed (such enormities scorning)  
Each travelling wight,  
A warm couch for the night,  
And fourpence in cash in the morning.

" *Old Chatham's* a place,  
 That's the nation's disgrace,  
 Where the club and the fist prove the law, sir ;  
 And presumption is seen  
 To direct the marine,  
 Who know not a spike from a hawser.  
 Here the dolts show with pride  
 How the men-of-war ride,  
 Who Gallia's proud first-rates can shiver,  
 And a fortified hill  
 All the Frenchmen to kill  
 That land on the banks of the river !  
 Such towns and such men,  
 We shall ne'er see again,  
 Where smuggling's a laudable function ;  
 In some high windy day,  
 May the de'el fly away  
 With the whole of the dirty conjunction !"\*

This poetic ode is not all that past experience has brought down to us, as witness the following appellations history has bestowed upon our group of towns.

"Starve 'em."	"Rob 'em."	"Cheat 'em."
Strood.	Rochester.	Chatham.

When it is considered that the navy obtained its chief supply from the press gang, and that the sailor, in all seaport towns, was regarded as the legitimate prey of the harpies and land-sharks infesting such places, some explanation of our ill-repute may be understood.

The treaty of Paris was signed 11th April, 1814, and the *Kentish Chronicle*, 10th June, 1814, records the arrival, in England, of the allied Sovereigns.

At the head of the victorious troops who then returned to their head quarters at Chatham, these allied potentates then marched, and Strood, as the accompanying illustration shows, was well to the front in giving them a hearty welcome.

The original from which this plate is taken is from an oil painting in the possession of Mr. Rodmell, late host of the Angel Inn—and whose forefathers for successive generations have been holders of this license. Almost every figure in the picture is, practically, a portrait of some local personage. The old front of the Inn, with its bay windows and sign, as it then existed, is

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\* Woodward : *Eccentric Excursions*, 1807, pp. 45-8.

shown; the turnpike gate is so profusely garlanded as to be practically invisible. Mr. Rodmell is under the impression that the event the picture celebrates is the welcome after "Waterloo," but search in such local papers of the period as are contained in the British Museum fails to support that view. On the other hand, mention is made in the *Kentish Chronicle*, at date above quoted, that a dinner was provided for the allied Sovereigns at the "Crown" Inn, Rochester.

The *Kentish Gazette*, 28th June, 1814, says:—

"Peace was proclaimed on Friday last (24th) in the city of Rochester, and in the evening there was a very brilliant illumination which extended to Chatham and Brompton in the one direction, and to Strood and Frindsbury in another."

"The Mayor, F. Patten, Esqre., attended by the Town Clerk, Mace Bearer, City Officers, etc., went in procession and amid flourishes of trumpets proclaimed peace at Free School Lane, at Eastgate, Chapel Steps, Troy Town and thence to Strood"\*—probably at corner of Cuxton Road, and at the junction of North Street and High Street.

After Waterloo, doubtless similar welcomes and ceremonials occurred, though, strange to say, there is no record of any in the files of the then existing newspapers.

#### VISIT OF PRINCESS VICTORIA.

On Tuesday, 29th November, 1836, a terrific hurricane swept over the South Coast of England. Its severity was marked by unusual and striking incidents in our locality. At the "Coach and Horses" Inn, Strood Hill, an extensive outbuilding and coach house were blown down and the materials carried to a considerable distance by the force of the wind.

On the South side of the bridge, a portion of the stone palisading, now doing duty on the Rochester esplanade, was blown from its situation on to the footway of the bridge; a fact which lends additional testimony to the evidence of ancient writers as to the danger to travellers caused by violent gales when the bridge was but a frail structure of wood. A Mr. Barnard was also blown from the top of his omnibus as he was driving over the bridge during this gale; and the Union Dover Coach was also blown over while crossing this structure, two of

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\* *Ibid.* Friday, 1 July, 1814.



Photo by J. H. Weekes.]

[From a Painting.

AFTER THE TREATY OF PARIS. AWAITING THE ALLIED SOVEREIGNS  
AND THE VICTORIOUS TROOPS AT THE "ANGEL" CORNER.

the passengers being so seriously injured that they had to be left at Rochester.

At this time the Queen—then Princess Victoria—with her mother, the Duchess of Kent, was travelling from the coast towards London. They were attended by Lady Caroline Strangways, Baroness Lehzen, and Sir John Conroy, travelling in three carriages, and drawn respectively by four horses. The royal party stopped at the “Bull” Hotel, and slept there, the Queen’s attendants judging it unsafe to attempt the passage of Rochester Bridge.

The royal party next day expressed much appreciation of the attentions bestowed upon their comforts by Mr. and Mrs. Birch, the host and hostess of the “Bull,” and appointed Mr Birch their postmaster.\*

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\* See *Maidstone Gazette and Kentish Courier*, 6th December, 1836; and *Maidstone Journal and Kentish Advertiser*, same date.



## CHAPTER XIV.

### ST. PETER'S PLACE.\*—AUGUSTINE MORLAND.

"Be that as it may, he swore so that day,

And oh, what a volley!—a great many heard  
What flowed from his lips, 'twere really absurd  
To suppose that each man was not shocked at each word."

—*Barham.*

"Vice has not a more abject slave; Society produces not a more odious vermin; nor can the devil receive a guest more worthy of him, nor possibly more welcome to him, than a slanderer."—*Henry Fielding.*

THE Morlands were people of position in Strood. At what period they first made their entrance here, absolute evidence has not yet shown. The earliest references to the family in our parish records are as follows:—

"Rebecka Morland, daughter of Austen, 26 April, 1581."

"Austen Morland, sonne of Austen, buried the viii. daie of Aprill, 1588."

"Rebecca Morland, daughter of Austen, buried xiiij. daie of May, 1589."

"Elizabeth Morland was buried the 1 daye of October, 1606."

"Elizabeth Morland was buried the xxx. daye of Aprill, 1613."

"Augustine Morland, jun., and Ffrances Attwood, maryed vi. June, 1613."

As our registers begin in 1565, and bear indication at that date of being very fairly kept, we may imagine that the above dates mark the entry of the family into Strood, the preceding 23 years containing no reference concerning them.

They were the owners of the house now known as the "Gables" (see illustration). They may also have been its builders. The house contains many features of interest, and—save for Temple Manor—is Strood's most striking architectural treasure. The late Mr. Martin Bulmer, at a cost of over £2,000, did much for the reverent preservation of this building. Its original extent ran from the corner of Gun Lane to the churchyard—North and East. One portion, possibly that nearest the

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\* See also "Peter's Place," item 27, p. 163.

churchyard and fronting the High Street, was anciently an almonry. As the building appears in the sketch it shows its original front elevation and design—these latter not being deviated from in Mr. Bulmer's new work. There is a very curious feature in connection with the walls fronting Gun Lane. Inside the present outer wall is another substantial brick wall, rising from basement to roof. The inner wall, as far as it



*Drawn by R. J. Beale*

*[From a Photo by A. G. Blackman*

“THE GABLES.”—ST. PETER'S PLACE.

extends, follows a straight line, inclining North-east; the outer one evidently took in land belonging to the freehold which formerly added to the width of Gun Lane at this corner.

The interior of this house exhibits many other interesting items. The beam and king post, which support the centre roof spanning the top of the staircase, is very fine; the staircase itself being also a splendid piece of work: this latter was erected by Mr. Bulmer. In the entrance hall is a fine old fire-grate with a pair of well-executed iron statuettes of draped female figures which, presumably, were meant to discharge the office of fire dogs. Behind the present panneling of the South-west room the walls are painted, judging by the fragments, with some floral design.

There is good reason to conclude that the Morlands erected this building. They were the builders and proprietors of the private Chapel which formerly stood in the South aisle of our old Church. This Chapel was erected in 1607, and the members of the family were buried beneath it. Under the *debris* in the crypt monuments to their memory may yet be in existence.

Augustine Morland, as noted above, was married on the 6th June, 1613. From what followed, we may presume that his wife experienced troublous times.

The parliamentary assessments made during the Commonwealth were serious; heavy payments were demanded both from supporters and opponents, although, as may readily be supposed, the latter received especial attention. As the Cromwellians gathered undisputed sway, they assessed the unlucky royalists to the point of extinction.

Augustine Morland, of *Gillingham*, was one of the accusers or informers against William Painter, of St. John Street, London, and Gillingham. On the 16th March, 1650, Painter was reported as having served under Lord Goring, and having plundered the well-affected; likewise as having acted as Commissioner for the King at Rochester, and subscribing £200 to carry on the design. He alleged sworn enmity, on the part of Morland, against him. Painter had previously paid a parliamentary fine of £200. For his aid to the King, as mentioned, Painter's Middlesex estate was sequestered, but was afterwards restored to him.\* Whether Morland's accusation against Painter and his "sworn enmity" arose out of the following is a matter for cogitation.

The *Domestic State Papers*, 1634-5, have mention of "Augustine Morland, Gentleman, of Strood." On the 16th November, 1634, he was, on the motion of Dr. Zouch, cited to appear in the High Court, at London. It was charged against him that he "was much given to excessive drinking, and at such times swore most desperate oaths and blasphemed the name of God. . . . For his notorious drunkenness and habitual swearing," so runs the document, the Court "ordered him to make acknowledgement at his parish church, in certain words to be set down by the Commissioners, and fined him £500 to the

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\* *Cavaliers and Roundheads: Kentish Note Book*, Vol. II., p. 74.

King, and condemned him in costs. Lastly, he was (20th November, 1634) committed to the Gatehouse, till he gave bond, with sureties, to perform the order of the Court."

For some time to come the experiences of our friend Augustine were of a painful nature, attended with "the insolence of office and the law's delay." He made another appearance before the Court, 29th January, 1635, with no result, save additional fees and costs to pay. On the 5th February, 1635, he again "faced the music" and "performed his submission, which the Court accepted." February 19th, he was, on his own petition to the Court, respited to the 16th April, when Martin Sheppard and Joseph Burchett came forward, ready, apparently, to swear to anything; but only some formalities took place, for which the unhappy Morland was ordered to pay another £10 "to the promoter," in two instalments. This he failed to do, and a "motion for attatchment" followed, which resulted in showing that Messrs. Sheppard and Burchett "deposed uncertainly" as touching the time Augustine had uttered "the blasphemous words articulated in this cause."

That matters were getting serious with Morland is apparent from his "reply," which was to the following effect, viz.: "That the promoter, by vexatious suits, had almost undone defendant, and that by his means £100 legacy was detained from defendant, so that he was unable to pay the charges; wherefore it was desired that the charges might be respited." . . . . Also it was alleged "that defendant having been censured and fined, and in a penitential manner having made his submission, among other things, for speaking words not fit to be named," it was desired the Court would dismiss him. As is, we believe, the immemorial custom with all things appertaining to the legal world, friend Morland's desire for celerity was not met. On the contrary, Augustine's case was referred to the "Court to consider," and he appears again on the 23rd April, and again—finally—on the 23rd June, when his fine, as doubtless the reader will be gratified to learn, was reduced to £50. The mental picture of Morland performing his penitential task in our old church is a moving one, and must have been highly interesting to the assembled congregation.

It is to be feared that these incidents meant the loss of the



Strood property, and that Augustine moved to Gillingham; where, possibly, some remnants of their patrimony yet remained to them.

Mr. C. A. Cobb has an old legal document, bearing date April, 1702, in which "Mr. Christopher Moorland, of Ratcliffe Highway, in the County of Middlesex, gent.," with "Elizabeth his wife," enters into a bond with "Thos. Gibbs, of Strood, in the County of Kent, butcher." The document, as will be noted, is made out "Moorland." Christopher signs "Moreland."

Those who attest the bond are:—

"Sam. Gibson.\*

Fra. Lynn.†

"Richard Sheafe.‡

Thos. Johnson."

The Strood estate passed to the family of Gother, and from them to Captain Wood.§ It is now the property of Mr. John Gillies.

Respecting these local assessments of the commonwealth, it may in this connection be mentioned that "Christopher Moreland" was also reported on 31st July, 1651, that he had been a captain at Strood, Gravesend, and other places. Also on 6th May, 1650, John Abell, of Strood, reported that John Branford, husbandman, was an officer in Lord Goring's insurrection. An order was issued that his estate should be secured and inventoried. A year afterwards it was proved that Abell, "with Mr. Hills, one of the Kent Committee, went to Branford's house, pretending to have an order to seize his goods, but offering to favour them for a monetary consideration; whereupon Branford gave £8 to Abell and £2 to Hills." These two worthy officers

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\* See Monuments in Church, p. 66 and 72.

† Mr. Henry Sheafe, of Strood, had power of attorney by the Mayor and Citizens of Rochester, to receive the dividends of £500 capital stock of the Governors and Company of Merchants trading to the South Seas, in trust for Francis Barrell, Esq., dated 21st October, 1727.—*Rye's Rochester Collections*, p. 226A. This Francis Barrell was a Trustee of Sir John Hayward's Charity, and apparently, son of the M.P. for Rochester in 1701. John Moyses, of Rochester—will proved 26 March, 1692—had four children. His son, Edward Moyses, was sworn to administer 5 May, 1705, devisee of interest in great and small tythes of Combe Farm, in St. Mary's, Hoo, houses in Rochester, and real estate in High Halstow and St. Mary's in Gillingham, Frindsbury, Higham, &c. Legatees, his loving cousin, Thomas Moyses of Gravesend, Mr. Thomas Weller, Mr. George Hooper, Mr. James Thurston, Mr. Bonham Hayes, Mr. Henry Weller "my late clerk," and Mr. Richard Sheafe "my now clerke."—*Prerog. Office Lane*, 42. Mr. Richard Sheafe, buried in Rochester Cathedral 15 March, 1734.—*Registers*. See also pp. 66 and 72, Monuments in Church.

‡ See "Our Vicars."

§ See "Old Church," p. 51.

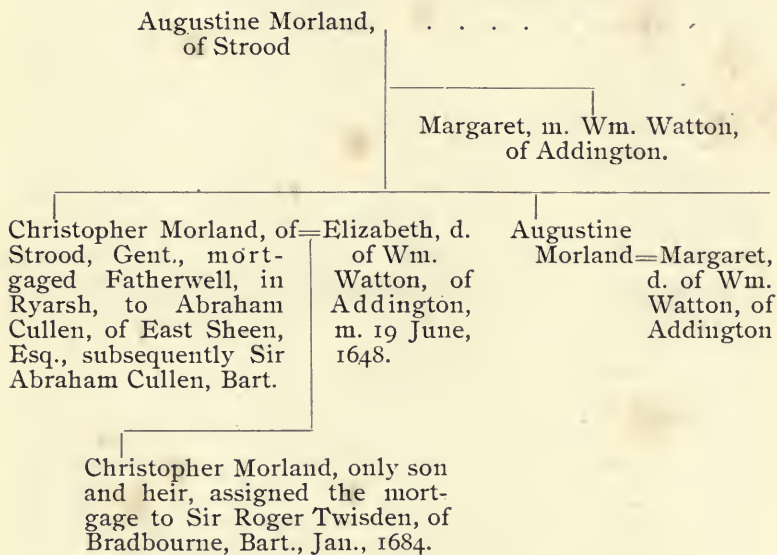


were made to give up their thievishly-begotten bribes, and on the 21st May, 1653, John Branford, it is pleasing to note, escaped under "the Act of Pardon," and his £8 was restored to him again.

The excellent Mr. Abell likewise "discovered" that "John Giles or Joyles" had "furnished the insurrectors with men, horses, arms, and money, and had carried himself with much malice and bitterness against the well-affected. Also that Giles had taken part in the Tunbridge rising in 1643." Once more it transpired that this creature "received £10 as a bribe to desist from the prosecution." It is satisfactory to learn that this pestilent rogue had again to refund the money.

The same rascal also laid informations against William Griggs and William Yappe.\* How these latter persons fared is not known. Good Old Times!

#### PEDIGREE OF MORLAND.



\* *Cavaliers and Roundheads.*—*Kentish Note Book*, Vol. II., pp. 100-1

## CHAPTER XV.

### THE DUTCH INVASION OF THE MEDWAY.

"Painter! Let thine art describe a story  
Shaming our warlike Island's glory."

*Sir John Denham.*

"Oft had Monk sent of Duncombe and Legge  
Cannon and powder, but in vain to beg;  
And Upnor Castle's ill-deserted wall,  
Now needful does for ammunition's call."

*Marvell's Instruction to a Painter.*

THE years 1665, 1666, and 1667 were each marked by a great national calamity. The first saw the Angel of Death pass over the land of England as aforetime it did over ancient Egypt; but while Pharaoh wept for the loss of the first-born, Britannia mourned whole households desolate. Next came the great fire of London, which had but local influence, while purification from the plague virus followed it with wider streets, greater architectural and sanitary advantages, and thus minimised its evils. The Dutch Invasion of the Medway, though confined to the lower reaches of the Thames and its great tributary, involved national disgrace, humiliation, and dishonour. The throne which singed the beard of the King of Spain, was now filled by a sensual hypocrite, and the seamen who had harrassed the Armada from the cliffs of Dover to the rock bound coast of Galway, were worthily succeeded by Cromwell's generals at sea, who made the power of England feared and its name respected wherever its flag floated. These brave and able sailors were now replaced by coxcomb gallants, as incompetent as they were fantastic. On the walls of the Painted Hall at Greenwich Hospital hang the portraits of admirals who had fought under Blake and Deane, who had no pedigree enrolled in the College of Arms, but had a long record of honourable service, and were practical sailors. "Some of the old experienced men were slighted, and fops put in their place."\* The vigorous rule and unvarying success of Cromwell was followed by the profligacy and corruption of Charles II., a pensioner of France. Evelyn deplotes the time "of

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\* *Pepy's Diary*, 10th June, 1666.

late anarchy amongst us,"\* then there was only one great master, now there were a crowd of mistresses. For the defences of the country, Macaulay states the House of Commons "readily voted sums unexampled in our history, sums exceeding those which had supported the fleets and armies of Cromwell at the time when his power was the terror of the world. But such was the extravagance, dishonesty, and incapacity of those who had succeeded to his authority, that this liberality proved worse than useless. The sycophants of the Court, ill-qualified to contend against the great men who then directed the arms of Holland, against such a statesman as De Witt, and such a commander as De Ruyter, made (?) fortunes rapidly, while the sailors mutinied from very hunger; while the Dockyards were unguarded; while the ships were leaky and without rigging."†

We find many complaints of this misappropriation of public money in the pages of *Pepys*, who, courtier and government official as he was, could not help expressing regret at the disgraceful doings of Charles and his parasites. Let us take his own memorandum.

"They say the King hath had towards this war expressly thus much:—

Royal ayde .....	£2,450,000
More .....	1,250,000
Three months tax given the King by a power of raising a month's tax of £70,000 every year for 3 years .....	210,000
Customes, out of which the King did promise to pay £240,000, which for two years come to	480,000
Prizes, which they moderately reckoned at ....	300,000
A debt declared by the Navy, by us .....	900,000
	<hr/>
	5,590,000
The whole charge of the Navy, as we state it, for two years and one month, hath been but..	3,200,000
	<hr/>
So what is become of all this sum?.....	£2,590,000‡

War betwixt England and the United States of Holland was declared early in 1667, and though Charles twice visited Sheerness to see that the forts there were in order, nothing was done.

\* *Numismata*, p. 16.

† *Taking of Sheerness*, pp. 7-8.

‡ *Pepy's Diary*, 10th October, 1666.

Money for the defence and strengthening of the forts was freely voted, but the King secured it for his own uses ; and when the Dutch fleet arrived in English waters all was panic, unpreparedness, defeat, and disgrace. The Dutch Commander, De Ruyter,



THE DUTCH INVASION (See page 197).

left Goree, 17 May, 1667, and on the 3rd June sailed from Texel (the Dutch rendezvous), "with a fleet of 60 ships of the line, frigates and smaller vessels, with 2 fire ships, carrying altogether 3,168 guns, 12,800 seamen and 2,195 troops. With the exception of 5 ships that separated and a fire ship that was lost in a gale of



wind, this fleet safely anchored on the 7th June 1667, in the King's Channel.\*

The wages of the English sailors (who were at this period chiefly recruited by the press gang), were years in arrears. Merchants refused to supply the Commissioners of the Navy—already £900,000 in debt and without appearance of payment—with stores, and the workmen in the Chatham Dockyard, nominally 800 strong, were found to be in reality about 12 in number, when the Duke of Albemarle arrived there in June 1667.

The pay of the men had been for some time made by tickets, the money being embezzled and mal-administered by those in authority. These tickets the men could not get honoured either in goods or money, and finally, to clear the matter up, Parliament in 1667, passed an Act (19 Charles II., C.7), to relieve the Navy from the men's importunities!

Sheerness was captured on the 10th, and "the attack on the Medway Defences and Ships was made 12 June, 1667, by a division of the Dutch Fleet commanded by Admiral Van Ghent. Six English ships mounting 362 guns were alongside a chain stretched across the river, and land batteries were also erected at each end of the chain. At 10 o'clock, Van Braakel in the *Vreede*, 40, made sail with a favourable tide and wind; sailing straight for the *Unity*, he boarded and carried her with a loss of 3 men only, notwithstanding that he was subjected to a brisk fire from the English ships and batteries." It's a pitiful story all round. The English vessels were either burnt, captured, or sunk; "the crew of the *Royal Charles*, 82, all left her . . . and the Dutch took her with a boat of nine men, who found not a man on board her." "Next day the following Dutch frigates and sloops . . . led the advance up the Medway:—*De Harderwyk*, 36; *Gernishem*, 36; *Utrecht*, 26; *Star*, 32; *Brak*, 20; *Postlejon*, 20; and the *Windhout*, 18." In their wake came the main body of the Dutch fleet. "Reaching Upnor Castle they opened fire, which was briskly returned from the Castle and from a battery that had been thrown up in the night on the opposite shore, . . . but the Dutch advance was not checked."†

Near the Castle were lying the following ships:—*Royal*

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\* J. Copland: *Taking of Sheerness*, pp. 7-8.

† *Taking of Sheerness*, p. 24.



*London*, 90; *Old James*, 70; *Royal Oak*, 76; and *Marmaduke*, 42; the first three were burnt, the *Marmaduke* was sunk, as were also the *Royal Katherine*, 76; *St. George*, 60; and the *Victory*, 80. The Dutch lost ten fire ships, one man-of-war blown up and one disabled, and another burnt.

The following letter tells its own tale.

"Gentlemen—We are very unwilling either to put the Kinge to the charge or you to the trouble of *supplying us in these necessitous times with either shipwrights, calkers, or seamen*, but soe heavy now is the hand of God upon this place, that (we feare) as well as the hand of man does now apparently fight against us. It was the opinion of all sortes of persons here that the whole navy dock and stores would have been burned upp on Wednesday, and for the prevention of the enemies being possessed of the Shippes, the Generall gave express orders that all the ships should be sunke were they ridd; but at length 'twas resolved that their cables should be cutt at the haulse, and they turned on shoare and then sunk as the lesser evill of the two; it hath put the Ships to a very great hazard, some of them, especially the *Victory*, we feare will scarce be gott off, and this afternoon the *Henry* and *Vanguard* gott loose from the place where they were on shore, and drove up farther into the river, where they lie dangerously enough; therefore, *we cannot doe less than begg yor present assistance in it, and desire that all possible meanes may be used for sending down 600 calkers, shipwrights, and seamen, viz.—150 shipwrights, 50 calkers, and 400 seamen and watermen*, without which we feare some of the ships may miscarry. This we thought our duty to represent to the Board, and desire your services and sudden consideration of it.

(Signed)

BROUNCKER,  
PETER PETT.

Chatham, 14th June, 1667.

We shall also wante halfe-a-dozen able masters and fower shipwrights, whereof one of them to be Mr. Shish."\*

During these engagements, English seamen were seen upon the Dutch vessels.—(an old Parliamentary soldier, Colonel Dolman, led the force of 800 Dutch that took Sheerness)—who were also heard speaking to each other and saying, "We did heretofore fight for tickets, now we fight for dollars." This fact is corroborated by the *Journals of the House of Commons*, 14th February, 1668. Colonel Dolman's force of 800 men consisted chiefly of discontented English sailors, which had been drafted from the various ships of the Dutch Fleet, in which they were then serving. Misled by information supplied to the Hague

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\* *Taking of Sheerness*, p. 26.

from disaffected Puritan sources, the Dutch Government were under the impression that the English people were ready for revolt, and would join such a force directly it was landed. Meeting with no such encouragement, the design was soon abandoned.

The following table showing the English ships lost (as are also the chief materials concerning this event) are taken from Mr. Copland's little booklet previously alluded to.\*

Dolphin	}	Fire-Ships sunk.
Barbadoes Merchant		
Unicorne		
John and Sarah		
Constant John		
Edward and Eve	}	Ketches sunk.
The Hinde		
Fortune Dogger		
Crown and Brill		Hulk Burnt.
Marmaduke, 42		Sunk.
Matthias, 54	}	Burnt.
Charles the Fifth, 54		
Sancta Maria, 50		
Royal Charles, 82	}	Taken.
Unity, 42		
Royal Oak, 76	}	Burnt.
Royal London, 90		
Old James, 70		
Royal Katherine, 76	}	Sunk.
St. George, 60		
Victory, 80		

Such accounts as were published to the nation were either greatly minimised, or were mere concoctions of the officials.

Certainly the British sailor never appeared in a more deplorable light, and the reasons for such conduct are only too apparent. The loss of life was probably small. The *Domestic State Papers* of this date furnish evidence that Chatham Dockyard had long been denuded of materials as of men and money.

Following the treaty of Breda, 21st July, 1667, De Ruyter hauled down his brooms from the mast-heads of his ships and

\* See also *Arch. Cant.*, Vol. xvii., pp. 373-81.

after firing a grand *feu de joie* at the Nore, withdrew from English waters.

Three days after the penning of the distressful letter of Lord Brouncker and Peter-Pett, viz. :—17th June, 1667, "Edward Cressett," gaoler of the Tower of London, gives his receipt for "the person of Peter Pett, on Lord Allington's warrant, John Bradley, messenger."\* Here Pett was detained for some time, the desire of the corrupt and incapable Court partly being to make him the scape-goat of their malpractices "But he so vigorously defended himself, and proceeded to show how and where the real blame lay, that he was allowed to be bailed from the Tower, and the impeachment was very soon abandoned."†

Pepys is honest enough to record a rebuff he received from Pett at the examination before the Council :—

"I did say an unhappy word, which I was sorry for, when he complained of want of oares for the boats; and there was, it seems, enough, and good enough, to carry away all the boats with from the King's occasions. He said he used never a boat till they were all gone but one; and that was to carry away things of great value, and these were his models of ships; which, when the Council, some of them, had said they wished that the Dutch had had them instead of the King's ships; he answered *he did believe the Dutch would have made more advantage of the models than of the ships, and that the King had had greater loss thereby*; this they all laughed at."‡

Sylva Evelyn was an ardent Royalist, he designated the Dutch invasion of the Medway as "a dreadful spectacle as ever Englishman saw, and a dishonour never to be wiped off!"§

The illustration on page 193 is a copy of a celebrated Dutch print of the period and will help the reader to realise the scene. The people may be observed crowding over the Bridge to Strood, and making off by way of Cuxton.

The following is a translation of the wording which appears on the picture :—"A picture of the town and river of Rochester, Chatham, etc., Nicely sketched from life by W. Schillinks, of the North-West side; wherein is clearly shown the victorious effect of the Fleet of War of the high and mighty Lords States General of the United Netherlands. Which took place the 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23 June, 1667. Printed by Nicholas Visscher."

\* *State Papers Domestic*, 1667, p. 203.

† *Taking Sheerness*, p. 7.

‡ *Pepys' Diary*, 19th June, 1667.

§ *Evelyn's Diary*, 28th June, 1667.

After this event there was the usual locking of the stable door, the horse being already stolen, and elaborate precautions were recommended for the protection of Chatham, etc. Among which it was ordered that "a regiment of 1,000 men were to be always stationed at Strood, Rochester, and Chatham, to man and secure the forts . . . . and a chain to be fixed at or below Upnor Castle . . . . at least six fire ships to be always lying in the river . . . . and 1,000 spare arms always ready at Sheerness."\*

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\* *State Papers Domestic*, Chas. II., vol. 278, No. 170.

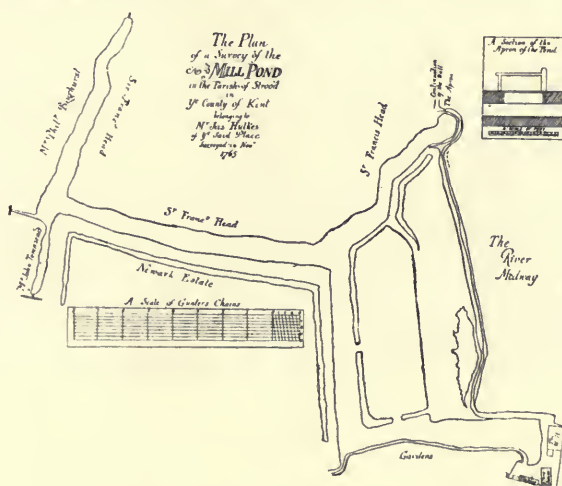
## CHAPTER XVI.

### BY THE RIVERSIDE.

"Sir, wherefore, since over this place is the way from the city . . . . is it that this plot is not mended? . . . . He said to me, this miry slough is such a place as cannot be mended."—*Bunyan*.

#### THE OLD WATERMILL.

FOR many generations a watermill stood by the riverside, just North of the present South-eastern Railway bridge, which now



OLD MAP OF THE CANAL, ROAD AREA.

*Copied from a Deed in the British Museum.*

passes over the Canal Road, its actual site being a little South of the land now covered by the large warehouse belonging to Mr. Alderman Ball. Under this warehouse yet remains a conduit (which forms the boundary of Strood and Frindsbury) by which certain portions of this land is drained. This mill was used for grinding corn, and its motive force was provided by the tides.

The land now covered by the railways, Station Road, the Fair Field, the Oil Mills, and the Canal Road with its extensive wharves, was then all a large expanse of marsh. Creeks and dykes intersected and wound around this space of land, culmi-



nating in a large pond at the rear of the mill. This pond covered a space from the side and rear of the present Watermill Tavern to the South Eastern Railway bridge, and what is now covered by the Canal Road. Until the time of the canal being built, no road, save an ancient trackway, existed at this spot. Upon its construction an arch was erected over that portion of the mill-pond for the passage of necessary traffic.\* The East wall of this bridge is yet *in situ*, and forms the outer protection to the warehouse alluded to. The original stone cap yet remains on the end of the wall which abuts the road leading to the river steps there situated.

At flood tide the waters flowed into this pond in great volume. From thence it circulated to the dykes, and as these were filled the water was shut in. As the tide ebbed, this force of stored water was used on its return flow—as the illustration shows, to propel its machinery. The conduit above referred to yet follows the original line by which the water then left the millpond.

A well-known Strood tradesman named George Sinclair, a baker, was drowned in this pond, having one dark night, it was supposed, missed the entrance to a rather frail wooden bridge which crossed it, and by a fatal error walked into the water instead. Mr. Sinclair lived at the house, 105, High Street, now occupied by Mr. Dow. Mr. J. A. Underdown succeeded Mr. Sinclair. One of the Hulkes family also met with the like melancholy fate. (See page 75.)

Alongside the river bank, from the old bridge to the water-mill, were various buildings. Mr. Edmund Aldersley (likewise a former Trustee) had a cornfactor's warehouse there. On the Strood side of Doggett's Square stood a large substantial dwelling house of the Hulkes family, the residential part attached to the mill. It was fenced in with iron railings, and faced West. It

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\* At the meeting of the Rochester Town Council, 13th April, 1898, "The Surveyor reported that the cover of a manhole in connection with a disused drain near the Canal Road, Strood, had given way, and that one of Mr. J. B. Martin's horses had fallen into the manhole and was drowned. — On the 4th inst. Mr. Martin wrote to the Council claiming £50 compensation for the loss of his horse.—The Committee resolved that, without prejudice, Mr. Martin be offered £40 as compensation; and, further, that the Surveyor at once take steps to have the manhole filled in."—*Chatham News*, 16th April, 1898.

This is instructive: the "manhole" in question was part of the arched covering of the disused old millstream.

was afterwards turned round on rollers to face the East, and removed closer to the river's bank. Thus we learn that the credit of removing a house bodily does not originally belong to America. Opposite the "Ship Inn" (Strood Esplanade) was another tavern known as the "Victory." The rough sort of road first made, which then constituted what we now know as the Canal Road, passed near by. Close to it was a kind of quay where a coal shed stood, and also a fishermen's exchange. Its North end appears in the illustration to the left of the water-mill. Here it was that the fisher folk of Strood landed and



WATERMILL, AND FISHERMEN'S EXCHANGE.

*From a Drawing by W. H. Reynolds.*

disposed of their wares. This old mill formed an interesting feature on the Strood foreshore, and Hogarth, when on his celebrated *Tour in Kent*, sketched it from Rochester Bridge. These inlets from the river extended to a point close to the (now) east wall of St. Mary's Churchyard, and ran along in another direction at the back of North Street. Near to St. Mary's Church was a bathing place, then much favoured by the boys of Strood. This land is indicated by the old map—copied from a deed in the British Museum—which appears at the head of this chapter. Early in the present century the Horsnaill family purchased this mill from Messrs. Hulkes; some years after they had a steam engine placed there to work the mill when the state of the tides made the water power unavailing.

## THE THAMES AND MEDWAY CANAL.

When the project of uniting the Thames and Medway by a canal was first conceived, it was regarded as an engineering feat of the first magnitude, and much public attention was aroused.

*Virtue's Fashionable Guide and Directory for Kent* gives the following account of this work :—

“The somewhat dangerous as well as very circuitous navigation from Gravesend to Rochester, round the Nore (a distance of 46 miles) induced several public spirited individuals of both towns, as well as numerous others of the metropolis, to form themselves into a company; and procuring an Act of Parliament, thus enabling them to remedy the evils alluded to. To effect this remedy a canal was necessary, the distance of country to be cut through being seven miles. Several apparently insurmountable obstacles presented themselves—but what will not capital and public spirit effect, aided by talent and perseverance? The greatest of these difficulties being a line of lilly country of solid chalk rock, as well as numerous land springs,\* which, however, were overcome by a tunnel being cut through the former, and by the exercise of talented skill the latter rendered harmless. The extent of this tunnel is two and a quarter miles out of the seven, and is not only a work of great magnitude, but one of great curiosity, and one of those triumphs of modern ingenuity which leaves us but little to regret in comparison to what we have to look forward to. The waterway of this tunnel is 22 feet in breadth, to which is added a towpath of 5 feet, being altogether 27 feet, through which an immense trade in hops and all descriptions of merchandise passes to and from London, Rochester, Chatham, and Maidstone; and in the event of war it will and must be a very great advantage to Government, as all Military and Naval stores can pass through this canal without any risk of being taken by the enemies’ steam vessels of war or privateers, and also with dispatch, which is of importance in a maritime point of view, when armaments are fitting out, &c., &c. The tunnel is lighted by a shaft in the centre, the effect of which on the water in the distance is truly beautiful, appearing like so many silver oars lying on the liquid element. The canal was commenced in —, and opened in October, 1824. Too much praise cannot be awarded the talented individuals who presided over, furthered, and brought into evidence this great National undertaking, which, next to the Thames Tunnel, stands pre-eminent.

“Among others, without being invidious, we may mention George Tiernay Clarke, Esq., the engineer of Shoreham, Hammersmith, and other superior bridges, and various other public works.

“The canal commences at Milton, near Gravesend, and enters the Medway by the tunnel at Frindsbury, at which place there is

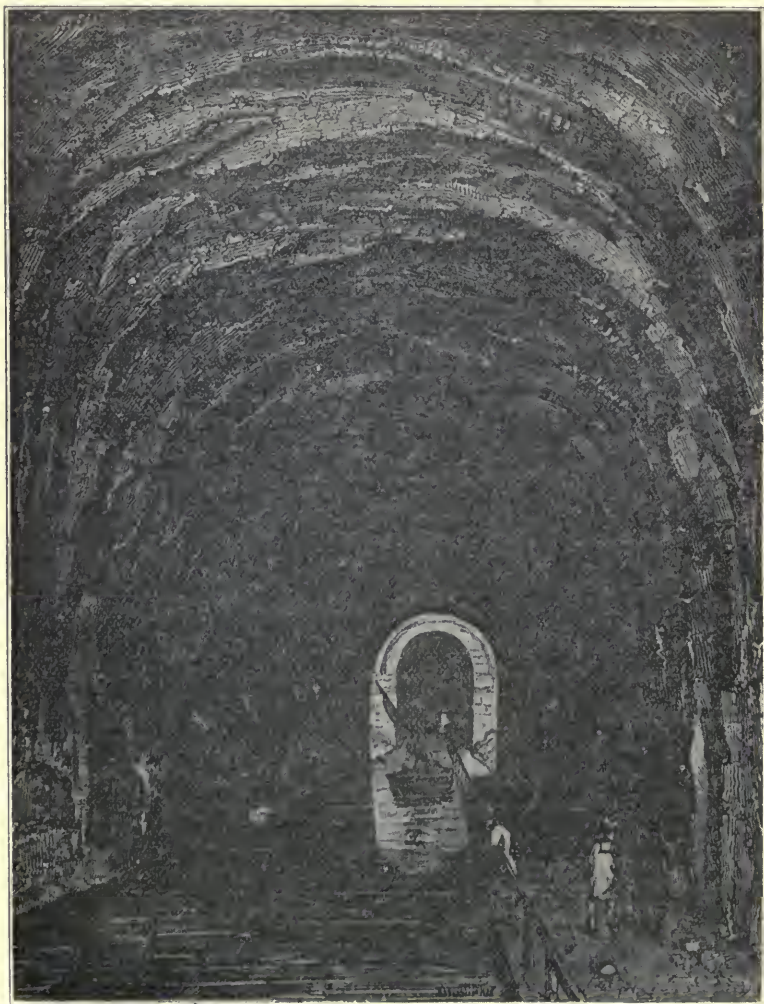
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\* See “Strood Pump.”



a large steam engine to supply the canal with water from the Medway at ebb tide.

“When the tunnel was first opened, a small steam passage boat was employed for the conveyance of passengers from



NEAR THE “LAY-BYE”—THAMES AND MEDWAY CANAL.

*From an Old Print.*

Gravesend to Rochester, and *vice versa* ; but as it was found to injure the towing path of the tunnel, as well as the banks of the canal, it was discontinued. Foot passengers, however, still

continue to pass to and fro. Some caution, however, is necessary to avoid coming into contact with the horse or horses towing the barges."

This tunnel became a favourite spot for anglers. The ventilating shafts shot down circular rings of light, inside of which it was a curious sight to watch the fish continually swimming round and round.

Should the project of again uniting the two rivers be revived, its course, as a tunnel, might possibly be shortened by its emergence at Stonehorse Vale, from whence excavation to its junction at Higham' would probably suffice. As the cement industry, jointly with other local trades, has grown to such dimensions, this may some day prove to be again desirable, as the excavated chalk now has its commercial value, and would help to recoup the labour of procuring it. Meanwhile, as the illustration shows, the needs of the cement trade have cleared, and are still clearing, a firm and admirable site for the establishment of docks at Strood, when the time for that great undertaking shall arrive.

Fifty years ago an account appeared of a "Steam Boat Trip on the Medway." The writer of the article alludes to this Tunnel as a "stupendous work of art." He says this ingenious and difficult work extends . . . two and half miles bored through solid chalk . . . a great part of it is arched with brick-work and the remainder is neatly hollowed out.\* On their journey torches were used. "After our eyes had become reconciled to the transition to almost Egyptian darkness, relieved however by the lurid glare of our flambeaux, we had opportunity to contemplate our rather romantic situation. The steamer filled up nearly the whole channel, and the noise caused by the reverberation of the dash of the paddles in the water, the indistinct light and the consciousness of being absolutely traversing the bowels of the earth, produced a very odd . . . sensation. The fragments of flint . . . sparkled brilliantly when the light of the torches fell upon their glassy surfaces," etc.

Financially this canal was not a success, and the glowing anticipations of the writer in *Virtue's Guide* were not realised. It was chiefly used by Maidstone craft, and unless a vessel got

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\* September 12th, 1822.—Three men lost their lives in passing through Higham Tunnel by falling chalk. *Robert Pocock's Diary*, p. 150.



inside the locks at quarter tide, it was unable to get out the other side until the next flood tide. This delay militated much against it, as meanwhile, other barges were able to sail round, saving the canal charges and being equally expeditious. Possibly, should the project ever be revived, different arrangements as to the mode of progression through it would be devised.

The canal, proving a financial failure, was converted into the Gravesend and Rochester Railway. The property was eventually bought by the South-Eastern Company, whose



OUR CHALK ROCKS.—THE "QUARRY."

*From a Photo by A. G. Blackman.*

line from London to Folkestone was opened on the 28th June, 1843. Their first train (the engine of which was named the "Trafalgar," or "St. Vincent") ran through the tunnel on Christmas Day, 1844.\* The rail, at this date, only extended from Gravesend to Strood, and was a single line, one rail running on piles in the water, and the other on the canal tow path. "At the time of the running of the first train," writes a correspondent in the *Rochester Journal*, "I was in Frindsbury

\* Evidence on these points of date are conflicting. "Gravesend and Rochester Railway, opened 10th February, 1845. South-Eastern (London to Dover) opened 7th February, 1844. South-Eastern Railway (London to Folkestone) opened 28th June, 1843. South-Eastern (North Kent Line)—1849."—*Haydn's Dictionary of Dates*, pp. 807-899.

Church when the first whistle sounded. After the service the Vicar and Churchwardens and most of the congregation went down in a body to see the wonderful machine. On coming through the tunnel, the funnel of the engine struck against the chalk at the top, so they took it down and cut it nine inches shorter before they returned to Gravesend. The engine was driven by Faithful Kirkham, the foreman of the locomotive department."

Allusion has already been made to the wide stretch of marsh this portion of land presented. When the tunnel was cut the chalk then excavated was placed upon the land now forming the site covered by the South-eastern Railway goods sidings, &c., and the quantity was such that it towered up into miniature mountains, ships being allowed to ballast free from the accumulation. When the land was ultimately diverted from its former pastoral purposes these creeks were filled up with this excavated material, and thus the dry land appeared. From the photograph\* (presented to the writer by Mr. C. A. Cobb), an idea may be gathered of the neighbourhood of the South-Eastern Railway Station forty years back. A very striking instance was afforded of the instability of this soil when the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company† were constructing their embankment north-west of the Station Road, and extending across the Fair Meadow to the arch crossing North Street. One morning the inhabitants of Strood, who were, naturally, interested spectators, were amazed to find that a large portion of this embankment, near to the Station Road, had, during the night, disappeared into the bowels of the earth as completely as did Dathan and Abiram in the wilderness of Paran. Floating on the top, on the level of the land, was a layer of oozy black mud. A little fortune, in the way of piling, was spent by the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company in making this perilous spot secure. The stupendous pier of brickwork which now chiefly sustains this bridge lends its silent, yet eloquent, testimony to this fact. The Pisa-like leanings of the Board Schools near by may also be cited as additional evidence.

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\* This photograph was taken by the late Mr. F. Steuart Cobb about the year 1854, during his boyhood's days. Mr. Cobb, who was a man of remarkable parts, died at Constantinople on the 16th February, 1899. Further mention of Mr. Cobb will be made in a later chapter of this book.

† This line was opened on the 29th September, 1860.

Since these words were written, the Rochester School Board have considered the advisability of abandoning the last erected of these schools as unsafe, and are now building others, adjoining those erected by this authority, on the higher ground in Gordon Road.

There was also another entrance to the Fair Meadow, seldom used except during the actual time of the fair. This was through a passage by the side of the ironmonger's shop nearly opposite Zoar Chapel. Several cottages of a poor type stood here, at the back of the High Street. These cottagers provided a plank



SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY STATION, SEPTEMBER, 1854.

*From a Photo by F. Stewart Cobb.*

bridge, to cross the intervening ditch, and levied a toll of a half-penny for the privilege.

The first public house known by the sign of "The Watermill" (within living memory) was kept by Mr. Freeland, brother to the John Frederick, of whom our parish records have had much to say. He was regarded as being much in the friendly consideration and regard of the Hulkes family, who were thought to have advanced his interest when such opportunity offered itself to them. The first "Watermill" was accidentally burnt down. Another place of entrance to Strood fair meadow was by way of this public house, a rather frail wooden bridge

spanning the mill pond for this purpose. A Mr. Roffway succeeded Mr. Freeland in the tenancy of this house.

The old Strood Pier faced the (then) terminus of the South-Eastern Railway. Its site is yet unmistakably clear by the existing remains of its woodwork lying two or three feet North of the sewer outfall, opposite the footpath leading from the South-Eastern Railway subway. This old pier was very short, its length being made up by a succession of old narrow barges (dummies), that had done service on the canal. During the Crimean war, a number of Russian prisoners were landed at this pier from H.M.S. *Adder*, and from thence transferred to London. Busses also ran daily from Canterbury and Maidstone, to bring and take passengers from the railway at Strood. A rather frequent custom arose, on the part of the *habitués* and lovers of the prize ring, to use the lonely marshes of the Medway as the scene for prize fights, to which spots Strood formed the point of departure. On one such occasion the outer dummy of the series alluded to was so densely packed with would-be spectators, waiting for the vessel to convey them, that it sank and left its occupants struggling in the water. Happily, no lives were lost, and great among the other diversions of the onlookers was that of observing the number of "top" hats of the period that went floating away on the tide.

In connection with the Hulkes family, and all they were to Strood, and Strood to them, the following extract from the *Rochester Journal*, Jan. 27th, 1898, will be read with interest:—

#### ROCHESTER BOOK SOCIETY.

"This society was established in Rochester just over a hundred years ago. A minute book of the Society, dated 22nd December, 1797, contains the following entry:—

'We, the undersigned inhabitants of the City of Rochester, in order to render mutual assistance to each other in the attainment and cultivation of useful knowledge, have agreed to form, and do hereby resolve and form ourselves into a Society, to be called The Rochester Society for the Cultivation of Useful Knowledge.

J. HULKES, President.

D. B. LEWIS, Vice-President.

S. DOORNE, Secretary.'

"The number of members was at first limited to twenty-six, it was then raised to thirty, and ultimately to forty—the limit of the roll at the present time. The first secretary was Mr. S. Doorne, and the present, Mr. Vincent Hills, succeeded



the late Mr. Webb in that capacity in 1881. The members meet on Friday nights, their home being the Bull Hotel, Rochester. On the 19th of January last the Society celebrated their centenary by a banquet at their headquarters, when some sixty guests assembled and were presided over by the oldest member of the Society, Mr. Alderman W. Woodhams, who has been identified with the movement for forty-six years. During the evening a handsome silver salver was presented to Mr. Vincent Hills, in recognition of his valuable services as Honorary Secretary."

"The Borough of Chatham has also its Book Society, which has been in existence for six years."

It will be noted, with satisfaction to Strood sentiment, that the first president was Mr. J. Hulkes, who, doubtless, being chosen for this position, had put forth his best efforts to establish this Society. It is also worthy of note that at the centenary banquet alluded to, Alderman Woodhams (Strood) occupied the chair, and Councillor George Robinson the vice-chair. It is gratifying to know that the intellectual efforts made in that day have kept their vitality down to the present.

Charles Larkin—to whose efforts for Reform (1832) the crumbling obelisk at Higham was erected to do honour—has been described as an auctioneer. In this capacity he had the sale of this marsh land, 24th April, 1810. The rather florid advertisement he issued in reference to its sale is remarkable, in that he forecasts the future development of this land in a way that events have since more than justified.

From Strood Pier (North) to the "Railway Inn," is now an open space of riverside frontage, from whence a fine prospect of the city, and of "the life" of the river is obtainable. The desirability of retaining this heirloom of the ages is hereby urged upon the city authorities. To allow it to be closed in would exceed the character of a blunder—it would be a crime.

#### QUARRY HOUSE.

This fine old mansion, demolished in the latter part of 1897 that its site might be utilised for cement manufacture, had long since excited the interest of the antiquarian and the student of picturesque architecture. It stood upon the South-east spur of the Chalk Hill, overlooking Rochester and Chatham, and commanded, previous to the days of cement making, a rarely beautiful and extensive view. Considerable difference of opinion existed as



to its probable date of erection, which was not solved until the researches of Mr. A. A. Arnold\* had set the matter beyond dispute.

Tradition had regarded it as the work of Thomas Lord Cromwell, who was Lord of the Manor of Eslingham in the time of Henry VIII., although its style of architecture can hardly be said to sustain that view. From the point of architecture the late Canon Scott-Robertson judged it to be Jacobean, and that his judgment was correct the researches of Mr. Arnold fully establish.

The land upon which this mansion stood has for many centuries been part of the possessions of the Wardens of Rochester Bridge, although the original grant (deed) is not in existence, having been lost or misplaced by the members of the Royal Commission (see chapter three) appointed by Queen Elizabeth in 1575. It was probably conveyed to the Wardens in 1438, in common with the estate of Little Delce and others, in which this property also finds mention. Some earlier deeds, yet in the possession of the Bridge Wardens, contain the following :—

“Monday before the feast of St. Gregory, 10 Edward III., 1335-6, *John Shotur*, of Strood, to *Gregory atte Mersche*—grant of  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre and 2 day werke of land in Ffrensberie in loco vocato *ffastyngdyche*.”

“Wednesday in the feast of St. Calistus, 29 Edward III., 1355, *William Godfrey* and *Helen* his wife, of Strood, to *John Welshe*, of Ffrensberie.—Grant of  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre of land in *Vastyngedyche* in fee.” This was apparently let to John Welsh at £1 6s. 8d. per ann.

“Thursday after the feast of St. Michael, 6 Richard II., 1382, *Robert P'Kot*, of Ffrensberie, to *John Walsche*.—Grant of 7 day werkes of marsh in *Fastynendyche* adjoining the marsh of the Almoner of Rochester in fee.”

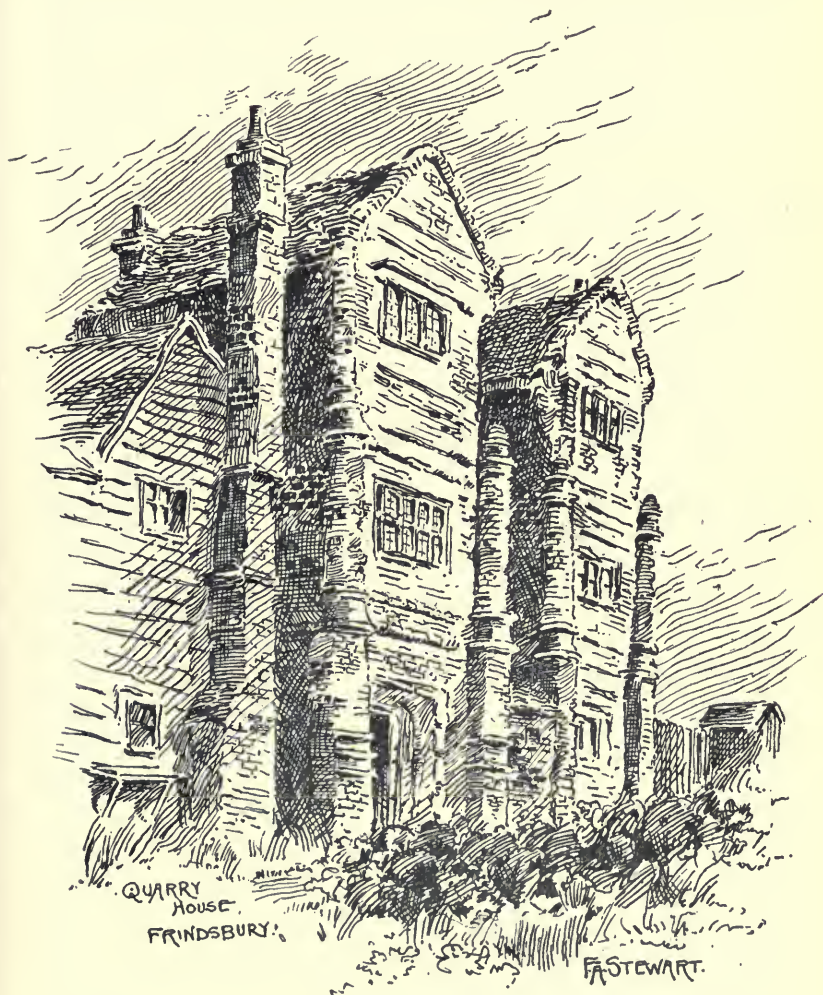
In a survey of the Bridge Estates, 1507, these lands are mentioned and the name “Lyme-house,” by which a portion was then known, is there used. “Lime-house Reach” is the name still retained for that portion of the river which flows past this land. “Lyme-house,” “Walches” or “Welshes,” and “Fastyng-ditche” are names used in descriptions of this property down to the middle of last century, when a new survey and plans were made and more modern descriptions adopted.

In 1583 the rent is £2 6s. 8d. per annum, paid by “Thomas

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\* *Arch. Cant.*, Vol. xvii., pp. 169-180.

Thomsonne," and in 1585 "Thompsonne" is entered in the rental, as holding the property. From 1585 to 1597 no alteration is shown either in name of tenant or description of property; in the latter year, for the first time, Thomas Thompson, *the elder*,



is entered, and in 1598 the tenant is entered as "Elizabeth Thompson, wydowe." In 1599 "wydowe" Thompson obtained a lease for 21 years. She was succeeded by Walter Thompson, probably her son. In the year 1615 the name of Best occurs (possibly as trustee), and 1616 "Thomas Thompson, gent," is entered as tenant in the rental. In a petition to the Bridge

Wardens, complaining of his widow, this gentleman is described as "Captain Thompson." The wife of Captain Thompson was, it is believed, the only child and heiress of Mr. Richard Wood, Lord of the Manor of Hucking, which was sold to William Taylor,\* and out of the proceeds of this sale the old Quarry House was, in all probability, built.

Mr. Arnold quotes a very interesting document from a survey of the Bridge Estates, April and May, 1624, in which it is stated that—

"Ellino<sup>r</sup> Thompson, widow, holdeth a fairer messuage, *lately built* of bricke, w<sup>th</sup> a garden wit<sup>in</sup> a bricke walle, a barne, a stable—thatched, a cherry orchard, about XVI. acres of upland, and XVIII. acres of salte merse, in the p'she of Ffrinddesburie, at the yearlye rent of £3 6s. 8d.; estimate: £11."

Two years later, this lady surrendered her lease, taking a new one from Lady-day, 1626, for 21 years at the old rent in consideration, as the document there expresses it, "of the costs and charges by her husband bestowed in *newe buildynge of the said tenement*."

Mrs. Thompson married twice after the death of her first husband; in the year 1630 to Mr. Thomas Sympson, of London, an opulent goldsmith, who died in 1631. There occurs a law suit between the widow and her step sons, which ended by her retaining the lease of the Quarry Estate and obtaining "two trunckes full" of her paraphernalia which are described as follows in the legal award—

"Waste coates, one edged with gold lace; one black taffatie gowne and kyrtle; one damaske petticoate, with fobbys, golde laced; fower pearces of gloves, and one peare of sheetes; one taffatie petticoate; a silke program gowne and kyrtle, lettered; a gowne and kyrtle of silke callendbarsh, and a little peece of the same stuff; an old gowne of wrought velvett; two flanns, with silver handles; three pairs of stockings; a pair of roses, and a mourning hat band; ruffs, cuffs, aprons, and devers parcells of small wearing lynnyn; also beaver hatt, and one hat band of ribbin, with six and thirty small gold and enamelled buttons, with a pearle upon each button; one little book of comon prayer; one brasse chaffing-dishe, and one old jackett; a ribbon girdle, with seed pearlys, and five knotts; and one olde trunck; and a large Bible; a large tapestrie coverlett; seven narrowe pieces of new cloath; doth for towells, about three yards (long), a piece; two cupboard cloths of Penthagas (?); two cupboard cloths of networke; a short dyaper table cloth; two cupboard cloths, one

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\* See *Hasted*, Vol. II., p. 519.

laced and one playne; three towells, whereof one dyaper; nine dyaper napkins; eight flexen stryped napkins; eight coarse napkins; twelve edge-worke buttones, with a pearle upon each button, six enamelled white and six red; thirteen small buttones, with a pearle; a bracelet, with amethies and pearle, and one other bracelett, with cornelians and eletropian (?) beaded."

In the year 1624, during her second widowhood, she surrendered her former lease, and obtained another for twenty-one years at the increased rent of £4 per year. In this lease the house is described as "heretofore erected and *builded by Thomas Thompson, Gent.*, her former husband."

In all leases concerning this estate the Bridge Wardens always reserve "the right to dig and take away chalk from the chalk pits there, for the use of the Bridge." Intermingled with the Bridge Land\* are certain portions belonging to the Manor of Frindsbury (Manor Farm). About 1635, the lady of the Quarry House married for, her third husband, Mr. John Woodgreene,† who, two years afterwards, died, and left her again a widow. Mr. Woodgreene was the owner of the Manor lands, and his widow began a serious legal quarrel with the Bridge Wardens, chiefly about the digging of the chalk for the Bridge. She took her case to the Chancery Court, where it appears to have dragged along for three years, ending finally in favour of the Bridge Wardens.

In 1650 Mrs. Woodgreene, whose lease of the Quarry House and lands expired in 1655, makes the following petition to her landlords, and uses the well-known Codlin and Short theory of argument for her exculpation from a difficult situation.

*"To the Right Worsh. the Wardens and Com'naltie of the Landes contributorie to the Repair of Rochester Bridge.*

"The humble Petition of ELLINOR (WOODGREENE), Widowe, Sheweth—

"That yo<sup>r</sup>. Pet<sup>r</sup>. hath beene tenat to yo<sup>r</sup>. wor<sup>shps</sup>. of the capitall Messuage, with the App<sup>ts</sup>., wherein she now dwelleth, (built at the charge of Thomas Thompson, gent., her former husband), and of certaine landes, cont. about 16 acres therew<sup>th</sup>,

\* See plan, p. 173, Vol. xvii., *Arch. Cant.*

† Mr. Woodgreene, in 1632, devised a tenement and orchard at Higham Ridgeway, in trust, to lay out the rent in white bread to be given to the poor of Frindsbury. John Woodgreene paid £100 to the Kent Committee for Compounding, on the 4th July, 1651.—*Proceedings of the Committee for Compounding.*



demised, situate, and being in the parishe of ffreundesburie, in the Countie of Kent, by and under a lease thereof made to yo<sup>r</sup>. pet<sup>r</sup>. about 14 years since, at the yearly rent of £4.

"Synce which, by the insinuat<sup>n</sup> and practice of one Peter Philcott, the Indenture purporting the said lease hath beene imbezzilled and for sev'll years last past deteyned from yo<sup>r</sup>. pet<sup>r</sup>., and by meanes of the said Philcott yo<sup>r</sup>. pet<sup>r</sup>. hath been exposed to sev'rall unnecessarie suits w<sup>th</sup>. yo<sup>r</sup>. wor<sup>ps</sup>., and to great trouble and expense, much ag<sup>t</sup>. her own ynclinac<sup>o</sup>n and expresse order, to her great disquiett and ympoverishm<sup>t</sup>.

"Yo<sup>r</sup>. pet<sup>r</sup>. ys now an humble suitor that yo<sup>r</sup>. wor<sup>ps</sup>. will please to grant unto her a new lease of the said messuage and lands for the term of 21 years, at the said yearlie rent of £4, or w<sup>th</sup>. as little increase thereof as may be.

"Ffor which she shall have great cause to declare your noblenesse.

[ ] bound to pray, &c."

That the judicious allusions to the moral beguilements of Mr. Peter Philcott and the promissory prayers of the repentant widow failed in their effect, the following endorsement of the petition seems only too clearly to establish:—

"It is not thought fit to take this petition into consideration until the original lease be produced and surrendered unto us.—  
Apl. ye 26, 1650.

A. MILLER,  
WM. PAYNETER,\*

GEO. DUKE,  
AUG. SKINNER,†

RICHARD LEE,†  
WM. JAMES."

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\* The Paynters, Peyntours, or Painters, were landowners in Gillingham in Queen Elizabeth's reign. William Painter was a Royalist, who served under Lord Goring, in the Kentish rising of 1648. They lost their property during the Commonwealth but regained it at the Restoration, and in 1720 it was alienated to Thomas Lambard, of Sevenoaks. A Thomas Payntor was Mayor of Rochester in 1461, and in 1467 M.P. for Rochester. (See *Local M.P.'s of Rochester*, Chap. VIII.)

† Augustine Skynner, the elder, was a London Merchant, and was elected Alderman, but paid his fine for not serving and was discharged; he died the 15th April, 1635, and was buried at West Farleigh. He had two sons, Augustine and William. The first was Knight of the Shire for Kent in the Long Parliament, and was a Justice of the Peace, the West Farleigh Registers testifying to marriages being celebrated before him, 1653-4-5-6-7. He was buried the 16th July, 1672. His brother William, on the 14th Feb., 1631, had licence with his father to eat flesh in Lent, "being both notoriously sicke and very ill-disposed in body." Augustine the younger, had a son of the same name, also buried at West Farleigh.—*Add. MSS.* 33891, p. 10.

† This Mr. Augustine Skinner was M.P. for the County of Kent, and one of the leaders of the Parliamentary party in Kent. It may be interesting to note that all the Wardens and Assistants of Rochester Bridge were, during the Commonwealth, members of the predominant party, and so remained until the Restoration in 1660, after which the whole 14 were rejected in favour of well-known Royalists of the County.

† Richard Lee, senr., was Mayor of Rochester in 1643, and M.P. for Rochester in the Long Parliament; just before Pride's Purge his debt of £1,022 16s. 7½d. was ordered by the House of Commons to be paid by the Committee of the Revenue. His son Richard, of St. Margaret's, Rochester, was fined £34 8s. od. as a delinquent.—*Ibid*, Chap. xx.



In 1654, the Bridge Wardens again became possessed of the estate, some breach of covenant terminating it a year previous to expiry, Mrs. Woodgreene being then dead. From this time forward "the place thereof knew them no more for ever."

The Frindsbury parish records do not begin until 1660, and there is no monument or record to this family in the Church. Mr. Atkins (Clerk to the Bridge Wardens) succeeded Mrs. Woodgreene, he died in 1660, and a Mr. Needler took a transfer of the lease, holding the property for many years. In a survey of 1674 it is recorded that "Mrs. Needler, widow, holdeth the Quarry House and lands, etc., at the rent of £05 02<sup>s</sup>. 06<sup>d</sup>.; old estimate: £12 os. od.; new estimate: £25 os. od."

John Cable,\* shopkeeper, of Strood, succeeded, the lands being held by that family until 1767, when Richard Russell, tallow chandler, of Strood, succeeded. In 1808 Mr. Thomas Lovett, of Northfleet, took a 21 years' lease from Lady-day, at £40 per annum, and turned it to commercial purposes, part being let as a dock in 1809 to Mr. John Nicholson, and another portion for similar purposes to Mr. John Pelham. A Ropewalk had been made there during the tenancy of Mr. Russell.† In 1814 Messrs. Brindley acquired the lease and the freehold land, and becoming bankrupt about 1820, the lease passed to Mr. Sutthery, the mortgagee. Mr. Samuel Stroughill (1835) took it as a yearly tenant, and after him Mr. Samuel David occupied it until 1847; Mr. Anthony Ryott, from the latter year; and in 1855, Mr. George Burge held it until 1858. Succeeding this gentleman the late Mr. Haymen, J.P., of Rochester, held it, and on the expiration of his lease in 1884, Messrs. Tingey and Son, whose works and enterprise are elsewhere alluded to, took over the entire property on a lease.

What this spot has been in the past these records show, what they are to day—he that hath eyes to see, let him see; for the change is great indeed.

For the above account the writer is solely indebted to the work of Mr. Arnold, frequently alluded to in its pages.

\* "Eleanor Cable, 5 Jan. 1805," is mentioned in the title deeds relating to Claremont House, Frindsbury Road, facing Wykeham Street, now the property of Dr. R. Ross Brown.

† Among the Bridge Muniments is a plan of the Estate in 1767, showing Ropewalk, Wharf, Cottages and Stores, and the great ditch or fleet then called "Basting-ditch."

## CHAPTER XVII.

### STROOD FAIR.

"There are revels this day at the village— . . . I do not command thee to abstain from them . . . but enjoy these vanities with moderation."

*Sir Waller Scott.*

"How pedlars' stalls with glittering toys are laid,  
The various fairings of the country maids,  
Long silken laces hang upon the twine,  
And rows of pins and amber bracelets shine.  
Here the wight, knives, combs, and scissors spies,  
And looks on thimble with desiring eyes.  
The mountebank now treads the stage, and sells  
His pills, his balsams, and his ague-spells;  
Now o'er and o'er the nimble tumbler springs,  
And on the rope the vent'rous maiden swings;  
Jack Pudding in his party-colour'd jacket  
Tosses the glove, and jokes at every packet;  
Here raree-shows are seen, and Punch's feats,  
And pockets pick'd in crowds, and various cheats."—*Gay.*

In the year 1206, King John, whose face and form, consequent upon his frequent visits here, must have become quite familiar to our forefathers, granted the monk's of Rochester permission to hold, once a year, in Strood, a Fair on the Feast of the Assumption.

Strood Fair, as we now behold it, is but an attenuated ghost of its former glories. In the middle ages it was, indeed, a great institution, useful in disseminating commodities among the people; huge in its dimensions, and well stocked with costly goods of every description, brought here from all parts of the kingdom, as well as other wares imported from abroad.

Canon Scott Robertson mentions that in 1574-5 the two Churchwardens of Strood attended the fair of St. Dunstan, in Rochester, and there disposed of a "cross, and other relics of Romish superstition, formerly used in Strood Church." This gives indication of the great variety of goods likely to be found at such a market. These two churchwardens were William Bartholomew (Ellen Bartholomew was "christoned" late in the year 1569) and William Flood. This latter name is also in evidence in our old Registers. The entry in the churchwardens'

account is as follows:—"Item: Sold at St. Dunstan's faire, the Cross and other gere, vi<sup>s</sup>."

Such an institution as Strood Fair was a great boon to the inhabitants at the time this charter was granted, and contributed much to the advantage of our little town.

One of the witnesses to an old deed respecting the "sand-pits"—now the North (valley) portion of the Churchyard—was one "Walter Makefair." Mr. Scott Robertson holds the opinion that Walter gained his surname as an apportioner of the ground and an erector of the booths at the local fairs. These booths were arranged in streets, and, during the time it lasted, must have looked like a very busy little canvas town. Through these past centuries Strood Fair has run its course, and yet continues, with a lessening hold, its struggle for existence. Only fifty years ago, its attractions and the number of people who attended it were vastly greater than what we behold at the present time. It was then held on the same ground as now—though a large ditch divided it—but covering a much greater area. The London, Chatham, and Dover Railway was not then in existence, neither was there, in this particular locality, a single house, where now we have hundreds. Even this extensive plot was insufficient to accommodate the stalls, which overflowed the allotted space and crept into the High Street. At this time it was customary to keep things going almost the entire night, dancing and masquerade booths being a fully recognised feature of the institution. Strood tradesmen recognised the event by keeping their shops open for the three consecutive nights. Evidently "early closing" was much out of vogue. For a period covering several years the fair was divided, part being held upon the old site, and part being held on a small piece of marsh land at the back of the south side of the High Street, entrance to which was gained down the roadway by the side of the inn known as the Royal Exchange. Gradually this became the sole place of the fair, until about ten or twelve years ago, when it again reverted to its original site. Here, from the 26th to the 28th of August, is its annual carnival held—usually accompanied, it may be added, by a dismal downpour of rain, which quickly converts the swampy ground into a perfect quagmire.

The following lines on Strood Fair were written in 1756 by

the Rev. Thomas Austin, M.A., who was then Vicar of All-hallows, in the Hundred of Hoo:—

A Fair there is just centr'd in a Town,  
 More fam'd for ruder fisherman than clown ;  
 Next to an open marsh the stalls are plac'd,  
 And with one double row of trifles grac'd.  
 Here come, from *Roffa's* further street, a throng  
 Of various maidens, beauties old and young,  
 Who, having laid aside, for one small space,  
 Their darning, knitting, needlework, and lace,  
 Like snow that gathers o'er ye ground,  
 In smaller parcels other heaps surround.  
 Each new acquaintance from ev'ry quarter meet,  
 In gabbling prate much a dish of chat complete ;  
 These are, in walking, so cemented close,  
 That face to face they rush, and chin to nose :  
 Then laugh aloud, and frown, and bless the fool,  
 For awkward blindness, just deriv'd from school,  
 Whose dangling sword blades dignify their skull  
 With much such grace as ribbons do a trull.  
 Here titt'ring Miss advances in the rear,  
 And proudly urges you the way to clear,  
 That hence her hoop may meet no flouting squeeze,  
 But safe convey her passing on with ease.  
 Here one remarks the garb, the gait, the view  
 Of all the male, or airy female crew.  
 Some with too many tawdries deck their head,  
 And scarce in form, if better taught than fed.  
 This ogling sly, This bridling up her chin,  
 Would fain be deemed a mortal Seraphin.  
 With eyes aslant, some mark what others buy,  
 Unnotic'd, would your gen'rous temper try.  
 This thoughtful sage steps slow, with glove and cane,  
 And moralises on each object vain ;  
 Another wishes for the evening's close,  
 For nappy ale and pipe, to toast his nose,  
 With oysters fresh, and company beside,  
 Voluptuously to make his minutes glide.  
 Here nuts and almonds in whole heaps are spread ;  
 Here children, gaping, squall for gingerbread.  
 Here some with copper halfpence try their luck,  
 And others urge th' advent'rous chance of chuck.  
 Here ribbons, ear-rings, grace a lady's stall ;  
 There other fancies do the eyes enthrall.  
 Here Jews, with pencils, seals, and gaudy rings,  
 Convert your money into needless things.  
 But would you have the quintessence of all ?  
 Then step you to the oyster-wench's stall ;  
 There crabs and shrimps (both stinking) new you'll buy,  
 Your palate teasing till you come to try.  
 The noise thus made alarms each gaudy fool,  
 With much proverbial cry, but little wool.\*

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\* De Vaynes : *Kentish Garland*, Vol. II., p. 785.

“There was one John Martin, a silly fellow, and a labourer in Chatham Dock, that I have heard has with ease eat a whole sieve full of cherries in summer time. Sometimes he has drunk a mug of beer with an ounce of tobacco stird into it, to the great gratification of an empty stomach. There was a young fellow I have heard of at Strood, one of these sort of boasters, a tobacco pipe eater, by way of contrast to the above tobacco drinker, who lost his life by such follies. Another would eat a candle from one end to the other with great dexterity.\*

24th August, 1812.—“Whilst in the field I heard (I thought) distant low thunder. Some time after, I heard a noise like the cough of a lion. So it certainly was, for soon after several caravans passed by, with wild beasts going to Strood Fair.

Wednesday, 26th August.—Close, warm day. Strood Fair. Rain in evening. . . . Went to see Mr. Pettito’s wild beasts and birds.

Friday, 28th.—. . . Third day Strood Fair. Jury sat on a young woman (a girl of the town), who threw herself out of the window at the Britannia, because she had been locked in.”†

“Pd. ye 15 Aug.; 1645, which was spent by Mr. Ward at Stroud Fayre . . . .”‡

\* From a note book kept by the Rev. Mr. Austin, Vicar of Hoo, 1767. Add. MSS. 24269, f. 44.

† G. M. Arnold, Gravesend: *Robert Pocock*, p. 83.

‡ *Arch. Cant.*, Vol. VI., p. 113.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE INNS OF STROOD.\*

"Shall I not take mine ease at mine Inn?"

*Shakespeare.*

"There is nothing which has yet been contrived by man, by which so much happiness is produced, as by a good Tavern or Inn."—*Boswell's Life of Johnson.*

SARACEN'S HEAD (1638): Extinct. Site unknown.



"RED LION AND STAR."

*From a Photo by A. G. Blackman.*

DOLPHIN: Ancient name of the "Bridge Tavern," High Street (S).

DUKE OF GLO'STER: Extinct. Site, Messrs. Aveling and Porter's Mess Room (S).

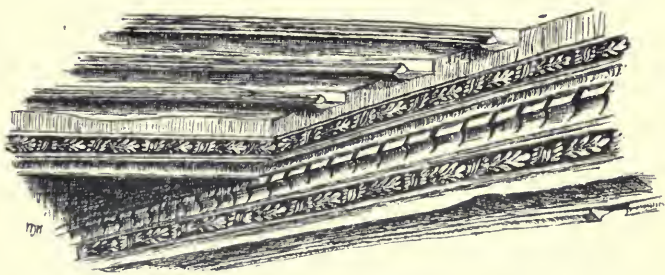
VICTORY: Previous to demolition of Bridge, site, opposite Strood Esplanade, Bridge approach.

RED LION AND STAR: This Inn formerly stood West of

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\* E.W.N.S.—These letters indicate which side of street, East, West, North or South, the building stood.

North Street, on North side of High Street. It was doubtless very ancient, and at one time may have been an important dwelling place. The ground floor possessed a ceiling of remarkable character. Massive beams of carved oak, beautifully executed, covered one room and part of another. Its design is shown in the annexed sketch, drawn by Mr. W. J. Wenborn. On the demolition of the building this ceiling was removed to Watlington and re-built in the house of Mr. Leney, brewer. There is a legendary reputation that this house was known at one time as the "Ferry House," and that the river, or creek, flowed up nearly to its doors. It is possible that from the creek, at the rear



CARVED WOOD CEILING "RED LION & STAR" PUBLIC HOUSE  
HIGH ST. STROOD.

*Drawn by W. J. Wenborn.*

(South) of the High Street, such mode of passage may have been customary.

SWAN: Extinct. Site near to the end of the old Bridge.

FLOWER DE LUCE: Extinct. Site unknown.

CAPON: Extinct. Site unknown.

KING'S ARMS: Extinct. Site now occupied by the Strood Conservative Club.

BULL'S HEAD:\* Changed to "Mid Kent Hotel." Site; North corner, High Street, Gun Lane.

WILLIAM IV.: Extinct. Site, High Street.

ANGEL: Site, North Street, High Street. An Inn bearing this sign has occupied this spot from time immemorial—certainly for over 300 years.\*

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\* See *Tradesmen's Tokens*.

CRISPIN AND CRISPIANUS: Site, foot of Strood Hill (N).\* The late Mr. Charles Dickens had a partiality for this house; for a full account of which the reader is referred to pp. 17-19 of Mr. Hughes' *Week's Tramp in Dickensland*.

COACH AND HORSES: Site, Strood Hill (N).

SHIP: N.E. corner Strood Esplanade.

SHIP OR STOWBOAT: Extinct. Site, opposite entrance to Stonehorse (Cliffe) Road. This house formerly constituted the Ancient City Boundary (see Charities).

SPOTTED COW: Site, N.W. Frindsbury Road.

RED LION: Site, N.W. Frindsbury Road.

CECIL ARMS: This license was transferred on the demolition of the "Red Lion and Star," High Street, the title being injudiciously changed on its removal.

VICTORIA: N. corner North Street, Gun Lane. A forge—spoken of in old parish documents, as the "round about forge," formerly occupied this site.

CROWN AND ANCHOR: Site, W. side North Street.

PLOUGH: Site, E. side North Street.

THREE GARDENERS: Site, E. side North Street.

BRICKMAKERS' ARMS: Cuxton Road.

CORNER PIN: Cuxton Road.

HORSE SHOE: Cuxton Road.

PRINCE OF WALES: It appears that at one time the "Old Gun" bore this title for a period. The Inn at foot of

\* The Crispin. A few ale houses, whose landlords are also shoemakers, or are patronized by the members of their trade, are distinguished by this appellation. Crispin and his brother Crispianus were born at Rome, whence they travelled to Soissons in France, where they preached the doctrines of Christianity, practising the trade of shoemakers for their support. But in the year A.D. 303, they were apprehended by the governor Rictionarius, and beheaded October 25, since which they have been considered as the Patron Saints of Shoemakers.

*Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 88, Pt. I, p. 593 [Remarks on the signs of Inns.]

Another tradition is to the effect that escaping from their persecutors in France, they landed in Kent, and were buried near Lydd, a heap of stones near there still retaining the name of "Crispin's grave."

Another account says their relics were washed ashore in Romney Marsh (see Chambers' *Book of Days*).

They were said to make shoes cheaply for the poor, and to have received the leather from an angel.

Stonehorse Lane (Cliffe Road) is also credited with formerly bearing this sign.

**OLD GUN:** An Inn has occupied this spot for centuries. Here, if the legend of its change of name be credited, the following incident in all probability occurred.

“A poor brother of the Charterhouse, London, the 1st May, 1769, set out on foot to visit a friend resident at Otterden Place, near Faversham. On the evening of that day he reached Strood and took rest and refreshment at a wayside Inn, called the ‘Prince of Wales,’ from the porchway of which house the travel-



“CRISPIN AND CRISPIANUS.”

*From a Photo by A. G. Blackman.*

ler had a view of a grand landscape and a very glorious sunset. Before retiring to rest, the traveller, in the presence of his wonderstruck host and hostess, tried many wonderful experiments in electricity and magnetism, a science then quite in its infancy.” —*Gent.'s Magazine*.

Formerly the “Old Gun” faced Cuxton Road. In the front stood the ancient City with its grey old Castle and Cathedral, the noble river with its rising hills verdantly clad. At the rear rose our own beautifully wooded hills, which the setting sun glorified as it sank. Truly a sight to justly merit the eulogy of the old writer.

**AMALGAMATION INN:** Station Road, W. side. At the spot

this occupier was found the dead body of Mary Abbott, to which reference is made elsewhere.

PRINCE OF WALES: W. Canal Road.

OLD WATERMILL (see chapter "Riverside"): W. Canal Road.

BRIDGE HOTEL: N. Bridge approach.

OLD BRIDGE TAVERN: S. High Street.

COBHAM: S. High Street.

RAILWAY TAVERN: S. High Street.

VICTORY: S. High Street.

OLD GEORGE: S. High Street.

STAR: S. High Street.

PELICAN: S. High Street.

GOLDEN BALL: formerly the site of a pawnbroker's shop, from which circumstance its sign was probably derived. N. High Street.

ROSE: Extinct. N: (opposite Pelican Yard) High Street.

THREE MERRIE BOYS—afterwards the BARLEY MOW: This was an ancient alehouse (see *Parish Register Burials*, 22nd March, 1699) formerly existing opposite Parish Church, between the forge and Mr. Illman's. Site now covered by two modern houses.

Everyone must have noticed in public house signs a curious combination of two incongruous objects, as the "Swan and Horse Shoe," the "Plough and Anchor," &c. These were not bestowed without a reason. Originally each sign was a single object, as the "Lion," the "Star," the "Mitre," &c. Nowadays, when a landlord moves to a new house, he keeps the sign, say the "Compasses," and announces that he is from—say, the "Duke of Wellington," at such and such an address. It was not so in former days; when a host moved, say from the "Swan" to the "Horse Shoe," he would tack his old sign on to his new one, which would henceforth appear as the "Swan and Horse Shoe." This is shewn by several old advertisements:—

"Thomas Blackhall and Francis Ives, Mercers, are removed from the 'Seven Stars,' on Ludgate Hill, to the 'Black Lion and Seven Stars' over the way."

"Benjamin Ingram, Mercer, is removed from the 'George,' unto the next House, at the sign of the 'Naked Boy and George'



in Ludgate Street, where he continues selling all Sorts of Mercery Goods at Reasonable Prices."

These instances shew, in addition, that other tradesmen besides publicans had signs ; in fact, before numbers were used, every shop had a sign.\*

It will be noted that in the design for the title page, Mr. Casse has pictorially introduced four of these old signs.

In 1636 there was only one wine tavern in Strood, kept by one Edward Monox.

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\* See also "Bear and Key," Whitstable. Vol. II., *Kentish Note Book*.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### STROOD TRADESMEN'S TOKENS.

"Whose image and superscription is this?"—(An old book.)

"The *Tokens* which every Tavern and Tippling House (in the days of the late Anarchy among us) presum'd to stamp, and utter for immediate exchange, as they were passable through the neighbourhood, which, tho' seldom reaching farther than the next street or two, may happily in after times come to exercise and busie the learned, what they should signifie."—Evelyn: *Numismata*.

IN the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the want of small coin was severely felt. The early standard coin was the penny struck in silver, bearing a cross on the obverse. These were broken in halves, hence "halfpenny," and these again into two pieces, the result being a fourth, which with the old English diminutive "ing" became a fourthing, farthing.

One may imagine these angular pieces of coin slipping from the toil hardened fingers of the labourer of that day, when such a loss was a serious misfortune very keen in its results.

The mint issues were insufficient for commercial purposes, and tradesmen began to issue a coinage of their own to meet the requirements of every day life. The earliest tokens were of lead, rude in workmanship, and the material was often obtained from the leaden bale marks which the merchants of those days affixed to their rolls of cloth. The first copper coins were issued by Charles I., and those of tradesmen were prohibited. These National issues were insufficient and tradesmen still issued Tokens "for necessary change," as some are marked.

In 1640\* petition was made to the King to make a dollar of silver and tin, which it was pointed out "may be made of as fair hardness and colour as any, and to so continue for ever." It was also noted in this document that "it will make 8 for 1 and may be kneaded as if it were made long before," (!) or if "his Majesty be pleased to make base money of blanch'd tin for England and Ireland, to pay soldiers, marines, and others for

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\* *Domestic State Papers*, 1640, p. 539.

meat, drink, and clothes, it may be so made that none shall counterfeit it, and such course taken that no foreign nation shall bring it into these kingdoms."

In 1648 the restriction against uttering tokens was removed, and every tradesman, who liked to do so, put forth his own coinage. At the Restoration efforts were made to suppress these private tokens, which was finally accomplished by proclamation, 5th December, 1674. Kent issued 596, the greatest number of any county—save Middlesex, which, as it contained London, naturally heads the list.\*

Boyne quotes 25 such tokens issued in Rochester, and 9 in Strood,† of which all obtainable illustrations are here given.

#### HENRY ALLEN

Was the landlord of the "Bull's Head," which then bore the dual sign (see "Inns of Strood," page 221) and was situated at the North corner of Gun Lane. It was demolished in August, 1873, and its name, when re-built, March, 1874, was changed to that of the "Mid Kent Hotel." It is difficult to assign any adequate reason for the suppression of a sign which had done duty for over 200 years in favour of its present appellation. We can only hope for the restoration of the old.



HENRY ALLEN AT THE STROOD CASTLE

Obverse :

Henry Allen, at the—A Bull's Head.

Reverse :

Castle, in Strood—A Castle.

Value farthing.

"Henry Allen and Sarah Spencer, single bothe, were married the 20 daye of December, 1629, by licens Ex. office Roffen." Thus runs the first announcement we find concerning this family. On the "16th December, 1632," their infant daughter, Sarah, was christened. As on the 25th October, 1635, "Sarah, the daughter of Henry Allen," is again recorded as being christened, it is probable that the first mentioned had died.

The above couple may be taken as the parents of the issuer

\* See *Boyne's Tokens*; Snelling's *View of the Copper Coinage of England*; Burns' *Beaufoy Cabinet*; *Kentish Note Book*, Vol I., pp. 65-7.

† *Boyne's Tradesmen's Tokens*, Vol. I., pp. 379, 80, 85.

of this token, from the following entry in our Church Register of Births. "Sarah Allen, daughter of Henry Allen, of Strood, in the countye of Kent, gent., and Margaret his wife, was born the thirteenth day of December, 1654."

There is no record of Henry's death, which may be accounted for by the long hiatus in the Register entries during the plague,



OLD "BULL'S HEAD."

*From a Photo by Councillor J. Eastmead.*

particulars of which are given in the chapter dealing with that period of the old parish records.

#### EDWARD BERBLOCKE.

The British Museum contains no specimen of this token, and the writer being unable to obtain a copy, no illustration can be given. The Parish Registers also afford no information concerning the issuer. Boyne describes his token thus:—

Obverse: Edward Berblocke.—The Grocer's Arms.

Reverse: In Strood, in Kent.—E.M.B.

Value farthing.

Berblock is an old Rochester name.\* In the 15th and 16th year of Queen Elizabeth "Edward Berblock" held a Catherine Scholarship Exhibition at Oxford.

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\* *History of Rochester*, 1817, p. 73.

No indication of the trade this gentleman followed is given.

"Mary Coverdale, the daughter of Robert Coverdale and Hester his wiffee, whas baptised the sickext daye of Aprill, in the yeare 1666."



ROBERT COVERDALE OF STROOD  
HIS HALFPENNY 1668 C R H

Value halfpenny.

#### BURIALS.

"June 25th, 1676, Esther, wife of Robert Coverdale."

Mr. Coverdale married again. On the 28th July, 1679, we find recorded as "christened," "Elizabeth, y<sup>e</sup> daughter of Robert Coverdale, and by Elizabeth his wife."

On the 1st September, 1682, we reach the final chapter which concerns this issuer, for on that day he was "bury'd," and "Sarah Buss" made affidavit that his mortal remains were "bury'd in wollen."\*

The initial H on the coin refers to his first wife.

#### PHILLIP EWER.

We come across this family name as early as 1589, when "Drussilla Ewer" was christened; followed by "Rebecka" in 1596; "William" in 1617; "Marye Filia Philemon" in 1621; Robert in 1622; and so on at recurring intervals, until "Robert Ewer, of Cuxton, buried heere the 13th daye of January, 1618," ends all to be learnt of this family. Of Phillip himself nothing is stated. There are two varieties of this coin, the second variety being issued in 1666.



PHILLIP EWER OF STROOD  
IN KENT 1652

Value farthing.

\* To encourage the woollen trade an Act was passed 1678, making it obligatory to bury every corpse in woollen cloth. Those persons who carried out this dreary office or witnessed its performance were compelled to make oath before a magistrate that this duty had been performed. Penalty for omission, £5.



## HENNERE FIGGETT.

Henry was a draper; the family name appearing as early as 1576, when "William Ffiggott was buried the xv<sup>th</sup> daie of September," and 'Catheryn Ffiggett was buried the vi<sup>th</sup> daie of December, 1578."

Among "christonings," William Ffiggitt is named on the xxiv<sup>th</sup> daie of September, 1568. In the year this token was issued



HENNERE FIGGETT. OF STROOD  
IN KENT 1654

Value farthing.

Mr. Figgett was Churchwarden of Strood, and Henry has left his mark upon the history of his parish in several ways. In his year of office a new register book was purchased, happily yet in good condition, particulars of which will be found in the chapter dealing with our parochial records. In addition to being Churchwarden, and issuing his token in 1654, it was his good fortune to be presented, "by Mary his wife," with a son named John, who, it is stated on the first page of the new book "was borne the 7<sup>th</sup> day of Aprill, Anno Dom. 1654." As evidence that Henneres shadow was not destined to grow less, a further gratifying announcement meets the eye on the "ffyrst day of Aprill, 1655," when our Churchwarden was presented with a daughter, who, as did Abraham's doubting wife, bore the name of Sarah. Unfortunately the little son John died, and was buried on the 3rd of July in the same year, having only lived three months; and alas! on the 26th September, 1659, "was bury'd Mary the wife of Henry Figgett." As on the 3rd January, 1660, our friend married again, his grief was not, possibly, of a very abiding nature. His second wife was "Elizabeth Breet."

The initial M on the coin bears reference to Mary his first wife.

## ANTHONY LOVELL.

It is recorded that on the 8th November, 1629, is "christoned" Jane the daughter of James Lovell, and "Elizabeth Lovell, the daughter of Antonia Lovell, and by Suzen his wife, the 31st iulie (July), 1654." A son, John, was also

christened on 5th August, 1682, and likewise "Anthony" who was "borne 5th January, 1684" Anthony was mine host of the "Angel." He died on March 28th, 168—something—probably 1687. Anthony Lovell, or his father, also issued two tokens in Rochester. One with full face of Henry VIII.—possibly from the "King's Head;" and one with the bust of Queen Elizabeth.\*



ANTHONY LOVELL IN STROOD  
MADE IN STROOD.

Value farthing.

The old accounts of the City of Rochester, contain the following:—

"The accompt of John Cobham, Esqre., May<sup>r</sup>. 1678-9, paid to Anthony Lovell, as by bill, £02 05<sup>s</sup>. 02<sup>d</sup>."

The former name of Mistress Walsall is given as "Constant Coalman," and she belonged to that dangerous class so distrusted by the elder Mr. Weller, for—she was a widow. She married "Ffrances Walsall, of the Cittie of Rochester, gent., the sonne of Barnabas Walsall, of the same Cittie, gent., on the 28th August, 1655." Constance in this entry is described as a "widdow of Strood, in the sayd countye."



TOKEN OF CONSTANCE WALSALL 1667

Obverse: Constant Walsall—A Bird.  
Reverse: In Strood, in Kent—A Still.

Value farthing.

On the "third October, 1679, was buried Constance Walsall," "Frances Brown" making affidavit before "John Cobham," that she too, had been "buried in woollen."

In 1640, on the 16th October, a "great inquest" was held at Rochester, at which Mr. Barnabas Walsall and others were mulcted in the manner and for the offences following.

Impris of Mr. Barnabas Walsall for brewing of  
twenty barrells of Tenn Shilling Beere con-  
trary to the Statute .. ..

£ s. d.

02 00 00

\* *Boyne's Tokens*, Nos. 47C-1.

Item of Mr. Barnabas Walsall for stopping the watercourse leading from Delce Lane downe Slutshope lane into a ditch there whereby the water cannot bee conveyede into the saide ditch but is turned into the highway there to the greate offense of his Ma'ties liege people there passing .. .. .	£	s.	d.
		01	00 00

*St. Clement's Burroughs.*

Itm. of Mr. Fancis Merritt for not amending his pavement leading to the Horswalk being often suted before .. .. .	00	10	00
Itm. of Mr. Barnabas Walsall for the like before ye Chequer doore .. .. .	00	00	06

*Strood Burroughs.*

Item of Thomas Merryman Comon Miller for taking excess toll .. .. .	00	15	00
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WILLIAM HOPTON OF STROOD  
1655.

WILLIAM HOPTON.



WILLIAM HOPTON OF STROOD  
1655.

The writer has not been able to find any statement relating to this issuer. The reasons already given respecting the ravages of the plague, and the political and religious bitterness of the time, may be accepted as a probable explanation.

The seven illustrations given are from plaster casts in the British Museum.

The late Mr. Humphrey Wickham possessed, with two exceptions, a complete collection of these coins. Canon Scott Robertson names among nine traders of Strood,\* a candlemaker whom the token depicts making candles. The writer is inclined to regard this latter specimen as belonging to Strood in Gloucestershire.

It should be remembered that signs were not confined to Inns; as previous to the introduction of numbers to houses, every tradesman adopted a sign, which he tried to make as distinctive and striking as he possibly could.

\* *Olden Strood*, p. 10.

## CHAPTER XX.

### SCRAPS AND GLEANINGS.

“A snapper up of unconsidered trifles.”

*Winter Tale*, IV., 2.

28th June, 1328. “The Kg. ordered the bailiff of Strode to call in all their ships of 40 tons and upwards, and to provide them with men, arms, and victuals, in anticipation of a French invasion.”—*Close Roll*, 2 Edward III., m. 22.

1395. “John Swan,\* Master of the Hospital of Strood, gave a bond in £240 to John de Shepeye, Prior of the Cathedral Church of Rochester.”—*Deering Collection of Deeds*.

1423. “Margaret Mills, Abbess of the Convent of Denney, Cambridgeshire, to Wm. Weye, of Strode, Kent, lease of a tenement, late Coombes, near the Church style in Strode, near a watercourse there, with liberty to remove a hall there with its chambers.”—*Ibid*.

Deeds now in the possession of F. C. Brooke, Esq., Ufford, Suffolk.

4th April, 1449-50.—“Grant by William Halton, of St. Mary’s, Hoo, to Thomas Frankys, Rector of the Church of St. Bridget’s, in Flete Strete, London, Andrew Castell, Master William Peter, of Strode by Rochester, Lawrence Renn, of the said parish of St. Mary’s, and Geoffrey Deville, of the same place, of lands, &c., in the parishes of St. Mary’s, Hoo, Halgestow, and Clyve.”—*Catalogue of Ancient Deeds*, 27 Henry VI., C. 588.

“Robert King, of Strode, by will dated 19th November, 1505, directed to be buried at Strode, and devised to his son John his tenement and garden, called ye Garlonde in Strode.”—*Prerogative Court of Canterbury*: Holgrave.

27th August, 1631. “Augustine Austen fined 3s. 4d. for running his Hoy loaden, in the gateway, Strood side, by the Admiralty Court.”

10th October, 1640.

Strood Borroughs. £   s.   d.

“Item of Thomas Merryman, common miller,  
for takeing excesse toll” ..... 00   15   00

—From the account of Phillip Warde, Mayor of Rochester.

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\* See p. 137.



1683. "Item. We present Stephen Benson, for running his hoy ashore at the key on Strood side, in the gateway, contrary to order of former Courts" ..... oo 05 oo  
—From Admiralty Records.

29th May, 1648. "7,000 men mustered in Frindsbury Fields, and were quartered in the three towns. The next day Lord Goring was proclaimed General of the Armed Cavaliers, marched to Maidstone," &c.—*Mathew Carter's Narrative of the late unfortunate Expedition, &c.*—*Kentish Royalists in 1648.*

3rd December, 1649. Thomas Mudge, of Strood, Kent, begs allowance of his title to a lease of houses in Strood, which Peter Philcott\* [who was sequestered for delinquency] held of the Dean and Chapter of Rochester, and which he mortgaged in the 15th year King Charles I., for £150 to Thomas Taylor, who assigned the lease to the petitioner. The County Committee was ordered to report.—*Proceedings of the Committee for Compounding.* [No subsequent proceedings extant.]

1449. In the 27th year of King Henry VI., two lawdays† were holden "wherein is presented North Borough and Little Borough in Stroude, and Southgate Borough in St. Margarits, w<sup>th</sup> the other boroughs of the Citty, w<sup>th</sup> some presentm<sup>ts</sup>, of Nichos. Easte—the Water cross ag: Stroud Church p<sup>d</sup>."

This was probably a fine levied on the person responsible, for neglecting to keep the water cross in repair. This water cross probably led to the creek at the back of Commercial Road.

"Also, it is hereby further ordered that yearly upon Monday next, after the Feast of St. Michael the Archangel, *being the usual day for which the law day* for the saide Citty is holden," etc.

By order 9, "The Mayor and Common Council were to meet at or before 9 o'clock upon Saturday every fortnight to transact the City business."—*Bye-Laws and Constitution for the City of Rochester, 1689.*

In the 38th year Henry VI. At a lawday holden "a presentm<sup>t</sup> made against one for assaulting the Maiors Serg<sup>ts</sup>. in the Psh. of St. Nicholas in Stroude."

In the 38th year Henry VI. At a lawday holden "the Water Cross by Strood Church is presented."

In the 37th year Henry VI. "Littleborough, Eastbo' *alias*

\* See p. 214.

† These "Lawdays" were periodical occasions upon which the civic authorities investigated matters of public complaint and importance. The Queenborough items may possibly offer some analogy.



Hawkesbo', and Northbo', with an indictm<sup>t</sup> agn<sup>t</sup> an<sup>r</sup> in Stroud Eastbough and Southgate borough."

In the 5th year Henry VII. "Littleborough, the hyghe way against Strood Church presented and for some leive (?) of the testam<sup>t</sup> of John Rigby to amend it, and also present the highway betwixt Nowark Cross and the mill, and yet not showing a gutter."

In the 7th year Henry VIII. "The wast of the Water Cross against ye Church was presented because it was turned for the meddow."

*Inter Alia.* "Laid out for the Citey this year 1655, by me, John Kennon."

"Item p <sup>d</sup> to six men to watch that night Mr. Crowne had bene robed (robbed) at gads hill had he not rune away" .....	o	6	o
"Item. P <sup>d</sup> the same men for waching next day"	o	3	o
"Item. P <sup>d</sup> for crising (christening) a black man"	o	2	o

1660. "Proceedings in the Court Leet of Queenborough, before John Tyce, Mayor.

"Daniel Baker, Ffreeman, for not attending the Court Leet, hee is therefore amerced at 5<sup>s</sup>."

"Mr. Nicholas Taylor and Henry Minge, for keeping each of them a hogg on the Common more than their stock, allowed a moneth's time for their removal, upon penaltie of xij<sup>d</sup>. a peece.

"John Taylor, for keeping company at his house in Sermon time at the last Lord's Day, and he is therefore amerced ij<sup>s</sup>."

"Ordered that the severall Victuallers of this Towne shall sell a full wine quart of strong beere for a penny to any person who shall have occasion for the same, under a penalty of xii<sup>d</sup>. for every default, not exceeding two quarts in one day to one *man*."—*Arch. Cant.*, Vol. XXII., p. 180.

#### CASES UNDER ROCHESTER CUSTOMAL.

"John Blake,\* son of Isaac, late of Strowde, Kent, gent., bound apprentice to the Skinners' Company. Xmas, 1669."—*Miscellanea Genealogica et Heraldica*; 3rd Series. Vol I., p. 44.

Letter of Attorney from the Mayor and Citizens of Rochester to Mr. Henry Sheafe,† of Strood, to receive dividends of £500 capital stock, of the "Governour and Company of Merchants of Great Britain trading to the South Seas, and other parts of America, and for encouraging the Fishery," in trust for Francis Barrell, Esq. Dated 21st October, 1727, with the common seal attached, on parchment.—*Rye's Collections for Rochester*.

\* See p. 98.

† See p. 72.

Mr. Charles Dalyson married Benet Sheafe, of Chatham.—*Arch. Cant.*, Vol. XIV., p. 400.

22nd August, 1685. "It was this day ordered and agreed that Nicholas Crossley, a glover that lives in Strood, in consideration of forty shillings by him now paid, shall have liberty to sell gloves on the markett days only within this City during his life."

12th May, 1733. "John French, the Blacksmith, of Strood, for using his trade (he not being free), ordered that an action be brought against him."

12th April, 1735. "Agreed that William Cullum, living at the 'Three Mariners,' in Strood, may sell beer, etc., in the house wherein he now lives, for one year, paying down 30s. and taking a License."

28th February, 174—. "Agreed also — Cornes may keep a victualling house in Strood, paying 30s. per ann."

The four preceding items are cited from an old MSS.—about 1695—headed "*Civitas Roffen*."

"In Shammell Hundred (inter alia) 'The same Bishop' (*i.e.* Rochester) retains Frindbury. It was rated at 10 sowlings in the Saxon reign, it is now cleared for 5. The arable is 15 plough lands. There are five ploughs in the demesne, and 40 villains,\* with 28 bondsmen\* have eleven ploughs. Here is a Church, nine ministers, a mill of twelve shillings, 40 acres of meadow, and a wood of five hogs. In the time of Edward and since that period it was valued at eight pounds, at this day it is appreciated at twenty-five. The moiety which Richard of Tunbridge holds as his Lowry is estimated at ten shillings."—From *Domesday Book*. Translation by Henshall and Wilkinson, 1799.

September 21st, 1635. The *Mary Hope*, ship of 140 tons, built at Strood.—*Domestic State Papers*.

1636. "Richard Mead, Jno. Mead, Thomas White and Giles Lone" were taken before George Robinson, Mayor of Rochester, charged with having struck the officers who were upon the Bridge; Friday night, 11th instant. Defendants had been at work all day on board the *Defiance*, and wanted to go to the "Saracen's Head," where they lie at Strood, for a cup of beer. They threatened the watch to "heave them over" because they

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\* Villains, Bondsmen, Borderer.—Cottagers holding 5 acres of land on tenure of service. Cottarii and Servi.—These persons rendered services to the Lords of the Manor for the lands they held according to degree; the exact nature of their obligations seems to be a matter of debate, though it is quite clear that they held their lands by tenure of service. Some worked for the Lord of the Manor on all Mondays, others two days in the week, others paid taxes in kind (see Manor Rolls); presumably the "Servi" were bondsmen.

refused them passage.—Carried to prison. They deny the offence, and the Mayor (who did not want them in prison) desired Sir Henry Palmer (Chatham Dockyard?) to punish them.—*Ibid*, p. 336.

July 16th, 1640. "Petition of Mayor and Citizens of Rochester to Algernon, Earl of Northumberland, Lord High Admiral. Desire to be relieved from the soldiers, there being more billeted in Rochester and Strood than in any other place in the county, viz.: 100 men brought out of Sussex, and 150 men pressed in Kent. They are like to prove very dangerous, for



OLD BRIDGE AND WATERMILL.

the town is full of seamen and workmen belonging to the navy. Those billeted in Strood are especially ungovernable."—*Ibid*, pp. 539-40.

This gives indication of tight times for our forefathers.

November 27th, 1649. The fishermen of Strood lay complaint before the Admiralty "that the fishermen of Milton break up the oyster grounds contrary to agreement."—*Ibid*.

4th October, 1650. Nearly a twelve months' law's delay!—"Admiralty Judges to settle matter in dispute betwixt Strood and Milton fishermen."—*Ibid*.

7th May, 1709. There were constant quarrels between Lord Herbert, Lord of the Manor of Milton, and the fishermen of Rochester, Chatham, Strood and Gillingham, concerning the

right of dredging for oysters in the East grounds, which resulted in a law suit at Westminster, a verdict for the lessees being given against the fishermen. Quarrels still ensued, till articles of agreement\* were drawn up defining the rights of the various parties. Signed by Thomas Herbert, and 144 fishermen, of whom 71 made his x mark.—Rye's *Collections for Rochester*.

March 12th, 1651. Navy Commissioners hire the ship *Blessing*, of Strood, 100 tons, for six months, at £150 per month.—*Domestic State Papers*.

22nd November, 1652. Request from Peter Pett, Navy Commissioner, Chatham. Is in want of tar, &c., also 100 seamen wanted. Has contracted with Scoles, of Strood, for one ton of tallow, ready money. Scoles refuses to supply any more unless the Clerk of the Check will make out his bills for what has been served. Wants half ton of tallow from London.—*Ibid*.

10th January, 1653. Petition of William Ashley, seaman, for loss of anchor, cable and sails, and rigging, belonging to the *John of Stroud*, lost while shipping 50 sailors on board the *General of the Fleet*.—*Ibid*, p. 513.

May 29th, 1655. Thomas Taylor, Maidstone, paper manufacturer; William Reade, New Head, ropemaker; Christopher Hill, Greenwich, waterman; depose to embezzlement of cables, powder, shot, and brown paper, by Richard Leake† (good name!), gunner of the *Pelican*, and Ambrose Read, of Stroud, fisherman.—*Ibid*.

31st March, 1656. Petition from fishermen of Stroud, to be protected from the press gang. They point out, among other arguments, that their labour is “useful in sparing flesh meat.”—*Ibid*.

1657. Petition of inhabitants of Rochester, Chatham, St. Margaret's, and Stroud, to the Admiralty Commissioners, *i.e.*: “We were ordered to take into our houses a great number of seamen from the Sound, etc., ill with spotted fever, and kept them until they recovered, and were promised recompense. We lost many friends and relations by the disease,‡ which grew very violent through the multitude of diseased seamen forced upon us.

\* Articles of agreement, indentes made, concluded and agreed, &c.

† Richard Leake was the Master Gunner of England, father of Admiral Sir John Leake, M.P. for Rochester, 1808-15.—See *Local Members of Parliament*, chap. xxxi.

‡ The Parish Registers of the time bear evidence of this fact.



There has been £415 due to us for two years past. We have not received a penny, and most of us are very poor. We beg payment."—*Ibid.*

A graphic picture this.

May 26th, 1662. Captain Jno. Cox writes to Navy Commissioners to know how he is to deal with "John Streaten, of Stroud, taken with cordage stolen from the *St. George*, by three ship keepers, who sold it to him, but have run away."—*Ibid.*, p. 381.

May 31st, 1664. Petition of fishermen of Rochester, Stroud, and Chatham, to the King. For continuance of their ancient privileges of fishing and dredging in the waters of the Medway, whereby they and their families, 346 persons, are maintained. Fryer has lately arrested eight of them for so doing; and threatens to arrest others. With certificate, dated 20th May, 1664, that they appeared at the Dock at Chatham at the time they were warned.—*Ibid.*, p. 600.

1670. Contract with Thomas Dew, of Stroud, for 10,000, or 15,000 Broom of 30 inches, at 36s. per thousand.—*Domestic State Papers*, p. 184.

1670. William Hilliard, of Strood, helped find an anchor from one of the sunken ships after the Dutch Invasion.—*Ibid.*

Captain William Coleman, in 1672, wrote to the Admiralty, asking that every seaman in Chatham, Rochester and Strood, should be sent to him, as his ship, the *Gloucester*, and six frigates at the Nore, all wanted about half their complement of men.\*

William Slaughter, of St. Nicholas, Rochester, married 29th April, 1697, to Mary Venman, of Stroude, Kent.—*Register of St. Mary Magdalen, Old Fish Street Hill, London.*

There is now an Hospital in Stroud for sick and lame soldiers, at the East end of the Town, adjoining to Rochester Bridge.†

Extract from the Will and Codicil of William Herbert, of Stroud, Co. Kent, 20th April, 1656.

His Exors. are—"Ffrances, my beloved wife, my loving cosen Master James Herbert Marchant, my worthie friende, Robert Watson, Esqre., and Mr. Lawrence Ffisher.

"To my daughter, Hannah Herbert, £150 and my two

\* *Domestic State Papers*, Charles II., Vol. 307, p. 176.

† S. Simpson: *The Agreeable Historian*, 1746, Vol II., p. 378.



messuages fn Eastgate, St. Nicholas, within the Cittie of Rochester."

To his daughter, Frances Herbert, £250.

"To my beloved wiffe, Ffrances Herbert, my greate Silver Cawdel Cuppe and the cover thereto, as a testimonie of my love and respect unto her," with an annuity charged upon "the messuage wherein I now dwell, and out of the Brewhouse, Malt-house, Barne, and lands, etc., thereto belonging, situate in the psh. of Strood, aforesaid."

Item :—"I give and bequeathe unto my worthie ffriend, Mr. Ffrench,\* minister of the Psh. of Strood aforesaid, the sume of fortie shillings of lawful money of England, to preach my funeral sermon."

Also refers to his four messuages in the parish of Strood, in the several occupations of Micheal Chestbourne, Thomas Allbury (?), Thomas Millen, and John Allynghton.

After his wife's death, "the messuage wherein I now dwelle, Brewhouse, malthouse, coppers, furnaces, cisterns, Ffatts, etc.," go to his eldest son, John Herbert. To William Herbert Scrivener his messuage in Key Street, Bobbing and Newington.

"Syned, sealed and published in the presence of Isaac Blake,\* Thomas Whitton, Philemon Ewer,\* Richard Head."

The Codicil is witnessed by "Joseph Ceasar,† W. William Godero, Thomas Whitton."

From old wills at Somerset House, the writer has extracted the following:—

Dame Elizabeth Thurston, late wife of Sir John Thurston, Knight and Alderman of the City of London, made the following bequest to Strood Church, "21 Marche, a thousand five hundred and twenty."

"I will that myn excetours ordeyn and provide an honest prest to synge and pray within the church of Strode, in Kent, for the souls of Henery Tenacre (?), my grandfader, my fader, my moder, and all xtyn (christian) soules by the space of three yeares, and the same preest to have for his salary and wage xx<sup>d</sup>. (?) yerely during the same iii yeares. Also I give and bequeathe unto the same Parish Church of Strode, a crosse (?), Mary and John of silver gilt, of the value of xxvi., and three awter clothes, payyd (lined) with satin and velvet figures, for iii. awters within the said Church of Strode, and I will that myn Armes and the

\* See pp. 98, 99, 107, and "Tradesmen's Tokens."

† There is a monument to Dr. Augustine Cæsar, died 7th August, 1683, in Rochester Cathedral.—See the Epitaph, and of several descendants, *Reg. Roff*, p. 713.—See *Domestic State Papers*, 1660, p. 163, for maudamus for his Oxford degree.—See also *Strood in the Olden Time*.

Armes of the said Sir John Thurston with a picture of the Trinitie be embroidered."

1521. 23 *Maynevering. Thurston.*

This lady, whose birthplace was doubtless in Strood, left great wealth, her bequests covering many sheets of folio.

RICHARD NOWON, 1st August, 1501. Bequeaths his "soule to God and Seynt Marye and to all the Seynts in heven," and wills that he be buried "in the queyre of our lady in the Churche of Seynt Nicholas, of Strode. Also I bequeathe to the for said queyre for my burying vi<sup>s</sup>. viij<sup>d</sup>. Item: I bequeath to high autler for alms and forgotten tithes xx<sup>d</sup>. Also I bequeath to an honest preest v<sup>d</sup>. to syng tientall (?) of Seynt gregory by the space of vii. hole yere for my soule and my wiffe soule, all my friends soules (evidently Richard was a large hearted fellow) and all xtian soules. Also I bequeath and will that John my son have my house in Strode and all my lande lying within the Parishe of Strode and all other places freely to give and sell (which lande was late purchased of Agatha Noone (?), of Strode). Also I will that John my son, pay to Walter my son xx. marks when he cometh to the age of xxii. yeres, in moneye worthe catell, coine or other stuffe as they agrey at that day. Also that Walter afor<sup>d</sup> grant in part of payment his xx. marks and teyne of oxen as they be worth at that tyme. Also I will that John my son have all my goods, moeavabble and unmoeavabble where should they be found, on thys condicon that he fynde Thomas my son a honest list of such goods as I have left in his broder's hands, as long at it shall please God the for said Thomas shall lyve here in this worlde. The residew of all my goods not bequeathed, I bequeath it to John my son, whom I ordeyn and make my trew and faithfull exec<sup>r</sup> and Walter my son w<sup>th</sup> hym to dispose my goods to the pleasure of God and to the helthe of my soul (To thys my last Will and true testament thyes witness.

"B John Thompson, pyshe preest, Richard Nowon, Agatha Nowon, w<sup>th</sup> others."—(27 *Bennett*).

The above document speaks for itself.

#### MARY CARLETON, THE GERMAN PRINCESS.

This person was one of those vulgar tricksters common to all ages. She was the daughter of "William Madders, late of

Canterbury, musician, deceased." This lady, like the woman of Samaria, went in for a number of husbands, the first of whom was Day, a bricklayer; the second Billing, a doctor; and the third a barrister, named Carleton. She was, by her third husband, charged with the crime of bigamy, but was acquitted, as the marriages to the two former could not be proved. This woman gave herself out as being a German Princess, and used many aliases: among them being—Henrietta de Wolway, Mary Modders, Mary Steadman, Mary Vaughan, Madam Day, Madam George, Mary Finch, etc. Carleton, her prosecuting husband, went to St. Mildred's, Canterbury, to try and prove his case. The Clerk (see also note on "Our Parish Registers," pp. 96-7) said that "the former Clerke did seldom or never register any marriages."—*Mary Carleton*, p. 34.

The case excited great public interest at the time, and many chap books, giving accounts of the adventuress, her fortunes, and the trial, were published. See *Mary Carleton; the Great Tryall and Arraignment*, 1663. *The Ultimate Vale of J. C.* 1663. *Memoirs of the Life of Mary Carleton*, 1673. *The Counterfeit Lady Unveiled*; 1679. Commonly stiled the German Princess.

Her doings affect Strood only to the extent that a number of the names she used as aliases are to be found in our old Registers; and also (see "Our Vicars") because "Man, the parson," is mentioned several times in the proceedings of the trial as being the officiating clergyman who performed the marriage ceremony. Whether the wilful damage done to the Register (see pp. 96-9) is wholly due to the causes given in the note to the Register Chapter, or is partly due to the German Princess, must remain a debateable question.

JAMES POULSON.

Published *The Business of a Gospel Minister* (Belfast, 1776); *Lyric Poems* (Glasgow, 1779); *Observations* (Belfast, 1777); and Seven Tracts. "Sold by the Author at his Academy, Strood, where youth are taught English, Grammar, Writing, and Arithmetic." 1792. These tracts are prosy (autobiographical), and concern, principally, some quarrel with a certain Gregory Warner.

13th May, 1814. The *Kentish Chronicle* quotes the price of green peas, viz.—"4 Guineas a Quart!"

## DESTRUCTIVE FIRE AT CHATHAM.

On the 3rd March, 1820, a serious fire occurred at Chatham, resulting in a loss of £100,000. A public collection was made, to which Strood responded to the extent of £39 18s. od. Among the contributors were: Peter Gunning, John Gibbs, Mrs. Horsnail (2), Mrs. Hulkes, Aldersley, Brunker, Butcher, Buck, Edwards (2), Goldstone, B. Howes, Rev. Hargreaves, Lash, Lurcock, Mace, Maiden, Rodmell, Rashbrook, Rich, Rofway, Simmonds, Smallman, Smoaker, Sweet, Scoones, Townson, Tomlin, Dr. Weekes, "Worthy Briton" (a Benefit Society, £2), Wheeler, Watson (2), West, and Whitcombe.\*

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\* William Jeffreys: *Account of the Great Fire at Chatham.* 1821.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### \*WILLIAM WOOD, OF STROOD, KENT.

“Wonderful and awful are thy silent halls, O kingdom of the past!”—  
*Lowell.*

THE following is taken from the old folio edition of *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*.

The family names marked with an asterisk are to be found in our old Parish Registers.

#### WILLIAM WOOD, OF KENT.

##### *Examination of Wood.*

Date, 1558.

The examination of William Wood, baker, dwelling in the Parish of Strowd, in the county of Kent, before Doctor Kenall, Chancellor of the Diocess of Rochester, Doctor Chadsey, the Major of Rochester, and M. Robinson,\* the Scribe, the 19th day October, and in the second year of Q. Mary, in S. Nicholas Church, in Rochester.

##### *W. Wood charged for not coming to Church.*

M. ROBINSON: Will Wood, you are presented because you will not come to the Church, nor receive the blessed Sacrament of the Altar. How say you? have you received, or have you not?

WOOD: I have not received it, nor dare I receive it, as you now minister it.

KENAL: Thou Heretick, what is the cause that thou hast not received the blessed Sacrament of the Altar? and at this word all they put off their caps and made low obeisance.

##### *Three causes why Will Wood durst not receive.*

WOOD: There be three causes that make my conscience afraid that I dare not receive it. The first—Christ did deliver it to his twelve Apostles and said “Take, eat, and drink ye all of this,” &c., and ye eat and drink up all alone.

##### *Sacrament of the Altar.*

The second cause is—you hold it to be worshipped, contrary to God's commandment, Thou shalt not bow down nor worship. The third cause is—you minister it in a strange tongue, contrary to St. Paul's Doctrine; I had rather have five words with understanding, than ten thousand with tongues, by reason whereof the people be ignorant of the death of Christ.

KENALL: Thou Heretick, wilt thou have any plainer words



than these: Hoc est corpus meum? Take, eat, this is my body? Wilt thou deny the Scripture?

WOOD: I will not deny the Holy Scripture, God forbid; but with my heart I do faithfully believe them; S. Paul saith, "God called those things that are not, as though they were;" and Christ saith "I am a vine;" "I am a dore." S. Paul saith "The rock is Christ." All which are figurative speeches, wherein one thing is spoken, and another thing is understood.

ROBINSON: You make a very long talk of this matter. Learn Wood, learn.

KENALL: Nay, these Hereticks will not learn. Look how this Heretick glorieth in himself; Thou fool; art thou wiser than the Queen and her Council, and all the learned men of this Realm?

WOOD: And please you, M. Chancellor, I think you would be loath to have such glory to have your life and goods taken away, and to be thus called upon, as you rail upon me. But the servant is not greater than his master. And where do you mock me, and say that I am wiser than the Queen and her Council. S. Paul saith, "The wisdom of the wise of this world is foolishness before God, and he that will be wise in the world shall be accounted but a fool."

KENELL: Dost not thou believe that after these words spoken by a Priest, Hoc est corpus meum, This is my body, there remaineth no more bread and wine, but the very blood and flesh of Christ, as he was born of the Virgin Mary, really and substantially, in quantity, and quality, as he did hang upon the cross.

WOOD: I pray you M. Chancellor give me leave for my learning, to ask you one question, and I will answer you after.

KENALL: It is some wise question, I warrant you.

*Ezek. v. Wil Wood's question propounded to the Doctors.*

WOOD: God spake to the Prophet Ezekiel, saying, "Thou Son of man, take a razor, and shave off the hair of thy head, and of thy beard, and take one part and cast into the air, take the second part and put it into thy coat lap; and take the third part and cast it into the fire;" and this is Jerusalem. I pray you M. Chancellor, was this hair that the Prophet did cast into the fire or was it Jerusalem?

KENALL: It did signifie Jerusalem.

*The natural quantity of Christ not in the Sacrament.*

WOOD: Even so this word of Christ, This is my Body, is not to be understood that Christ's carnal, natural, and real body is in the same, in quantity and quality, as it was born of the Virgin Mary, and as He was crucified upon the cross is present or inclosed in the Sacrament; but it doth signifie Christ's body, as S. Paul saith, "So oft as you do eat of this bread and drink of this cup, you shall shew forth the Lord's death till he come." What should the Apostle mean by this word, till he come, if he were here carnally, naturally, corporally, and really in the same quantity and quality as he was born of the Virgin Mary, and he

did hang on the cross as you say? but S. Paul saith, "You shall shew the Lord's death till he come." This doth argue that he is not here as you would have us to believe.

D. CHADSEY: I will prove that Christ is here present under the form of bread, but not in quantity and quality.

KENALL said: "Yes, he is here present in quantity and quality."

*The Papists could not agree in their own Doctrine.*

CHADSEY: He is here present under a form, but not in quantity and quality.

"Yes," said Kenall.

"No," said Chadsey.

"I will prove him here in quantity and quality," said Kenall.

"I will prove to the contrary," said Chadsey.

And these two Doctors were so earnest in this matter, the one to affirm, the other to deny, contending and raging so sore one at the other that they fomed at the mouth, and one was ready to spit in another's face; so that in great fury and rage the two Doctors rose up from the judgment seat, and D. Kenall departed out of the Church in great rage and fury immediately.

WOOD: Behold, good people, they would have us to believe that Christ is naturally, really, in quantity and quality, present in the Sacrament, and yet they cannot tell themselves, nor agree within themselves, how He is here.

*W. Wood delivered, as was Saint Paul, by the contention of the Pharisees and Sadducees.*

At these words the people made a great shout, and the Major stood up and commanded the people to be quiet and to keep silence. And the God that did deliver Saint Paul out of the hand of the high Priests, did even so deliver me at that time out of the Mouths of the Bloody Papists, by the means of the contention of these two Doctors. Blessed be the name of the Lord, which hath promised to lay no more upon his than he will make them able to bear, and in the midst of temptation he can make a way for his (how, and when it pleaseth him) to escape out off all dangers.

Many other like examples of God's helping hand have been declared upon his elect Saints and Children, in delivering them out of danger by wonderful and miraculous ways, some by one means, some by another.

A NOTE OF WILLIAM WOOD.

*The notable deliverances of W. Wood.*

According as I have sent unto you the true record of my Examination before the Doctors above-mentioned, so I thought it not inconvenient to send you likewise certain Notes of my other two deliverances in Q. Maries time; and this I do not (as God knoweth) to get any praise to myself, or to reproach any other, but that God may be glorified in His works, and that our

Brethren may know that though there be many times but little help on earth, yet that there is more in Heaven.

About a month after my Examination, one Apleby and his wife (that were persecuted from Maidstone, in Kent), came to my house in Strowd, and desired me that he might have a place in my house for him and his wife for a time: because persecution was so hot that he could no longer stay there: and I, at his instance, let him have a place with me: but within a fortnight after the Papists espied him, and complained of him to the Bishop of Rochester, and the Bishop sent his chief man, called Ralph Crouch, and carried him to Rochester before the Bishop, and the said Apleby stood in the defence of the truth boldly, and the Bishop sent both him and his Wife to the Jayl of Maidstone, and there they were burned for the Testimony of the Gospel of God. And the Friday fortnight after, I was in the Market at Rochester, talking with another man, and the said Ralph Crouch was sent for me: and he coming within a stone's cast of where I was talking with my Neighbour, George Smally,\* one William Stanley, a Papist, dwelling also in Strowd, met with the said Crouch, and they two talked together for a while: and I doubted that they talked of me, because many times in their talk they looked on me: and then the said Ralph Crouch went over the street to another officer or Constable which knew not me, and sent the said Constable for me: and coming for me, knowing my Neighbour George Smally, took him instead of me, and carried him to the Bishop, and when he came before him, the Bishop said to his officers, "this is not the Knave, this is not the Knave," and the Bishop checked the Major and his officers, and said they mocked him, because he carried the other man for me, such was the mighty providence of God to defend me: and the Major the same night sent forty bills and men with other weapons to beset my house to take me, but the Lord kept me from them, and delivered me out of their hands: to Him be glory therefore. Amen.

The third time that the Lord delivered me was on Easter day next after. I had been in London all the Lent, and on Easter Even at night I came home to Strowd to my wife, and a child of three years old told one of the neighbours that her father was come home. And on Easter day, after their Popish Evensong was done, came Master Reade,\* Thomas Crouch, brother of the abovesaid Ralph Crouch, William Stanley, Thomas Bets,\* Lionell Newman, and Roger Branch,\* with three-score people or thereabouts, and searched my house very straitly for me: but as God's providence was, there was mault a drying on the kill, and they searched so narrowly for me, that I was glad to heave up a corner of the hair whereon the mault lay, and went into the kill hole, and there stood till they were gone, and so I escaped from them: but within an hour after there came a woman to my wife to borrow a brush, and spied mee thorow the key hole of the door, and there she carrying tydings abroad, immediately came a great company of men and beset my house round about, and I said to my wife, "you see that these four men seek for my life, that is, Master Reade,\* Thomas

Crowch, William Stanley, and Thomas Betts,\* for I do think that none of the rest will lay hands on me; and therefore, I pray thee wife, follow these four men, and talk loud to them that I may hear, and so escape; and if they search on the back side, I may avoid on the street side; and be of good comfort, for our lives are in God's hand, and though there be little help here on earth, yet there is help enough from Heaven;" and when these men were searching on the back side, I went into the street, among (as I guess) an hundred people, and none of them laid hands on me, neither said they anything to me; so I went out of the town, and lay there at an honest man's house at the parish of Cobham that night. At the same time also two of my neighbours, honest men and of good wealth, the one called John Pemmett [Punnett?], a fisherman, and the other named John Baily, a glover, because they came not to their Popish Church to buy some of their idolatrous wares, were complained of to the Justices, who did bind them to answer for their faith before the Judges at the Assises, which were holden at Midsummer after (as I remember) at Rochester, in the Palace Yard; and there was at that time a sail cloth of a ship tied to the top of the Bishop's Palace wall to keep away the sun from the Judges; and the wind blew and shook the sail, so that when these two men were called to be examined, and when they should have answered, there fell from the top of the wall three or four great stones upon the Judges necks, so that some of them which sat on the Bench were sore hurt and maimed, so that they arose suddenly all amazed and departed, and the two men were delivered.



## CHAPTER XXII.

### NONCONFORMIST CHURCHES.

“As the knowledge of ancient things is pleasant, so is the ignorance as shameful, and oftentimes exposes men to the scorn and contempt of strangers.”—Preface to Somner’s *Antiq. Canterbury*.

#### ZOAR CHAPEL.\*

THANKS to the iconoclasm of past rulers of Strood, this Chapel is the oldest place of worship in the parish. It is a plain, unpretentious brick building, somewhat in need of repair, as its lengthy span of life may well indicate, standing on the South side of the High Street, near to Rochester Bridge. An example worthy of imitation, considering the date of its erection, is the fact that it gives about eight or ten feet of space from the pavement behind the building line that goes to make up the High Street of Strood. Framed and glazed, and suspended at the back of the vestibule, immediately behind its substantial door, is the following account of its inception and erection. It is headed

#### EXTRACT FROM THE CHURCH HISTORY OF KENT.

“Strood is united with the City of Rochester by a noble bridge over the river Medway. Their vicinity led at an early period to various efforts being made to establish preaching in the town, amidst great opposition. A congregation, however, assembled in a house fitted up for the purpose of public worship, which was named ‘Strood Tabernacle.’ [The original communion plate belonging to this Chapel bears the same titular inscription.] And a Church of Christ was formed on the 5th day of January, 1785 ; when three sermons were preached, Morning and Evening, by the Rev., afterwards Dr. Simpson ; in the Afternoon by the Rev. Mr. Leggett,† Pastor of the Church.

\* Memoranda from Mr. Cooper’s book (see Chapter XXIV., on “Old Workhouse”).

“Mr. Irons did preach at our first Anniversary at Zore Chapel, 15th August, 1844.

The painting and gates  
did cost £7 0 0.

Collections { £3 8 1  
                  £1 16 8  
                  £1 3 0

£6 7 9

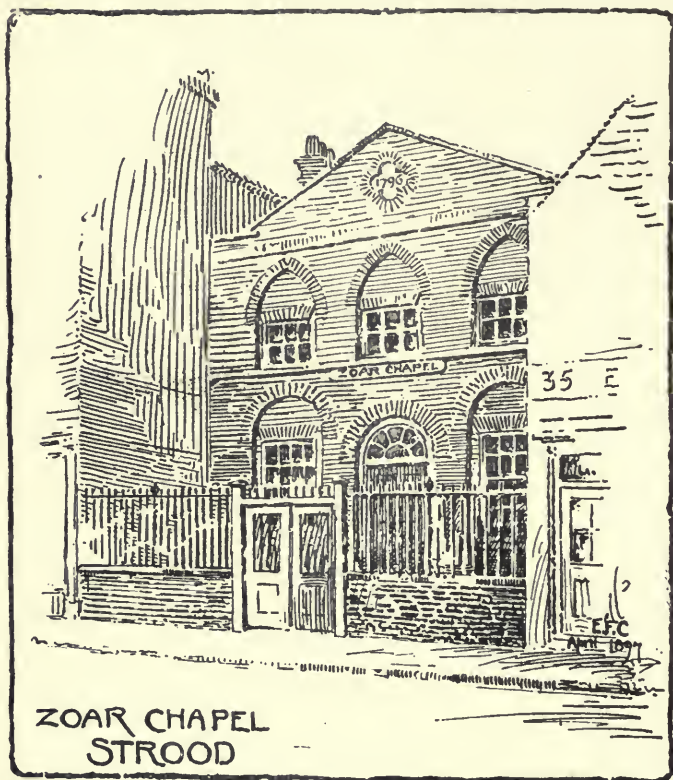
Gass was let in our Chaple, 29th December, 1844, cost fifteen pounds.”

† “The sinfulness of indulging our curiosity in hearing the word of God.”—A circulatory letter, addressed to the Associated Churches of Christ called Independents in the County of Kent. To the Churches of Christ meeting at Ramsgate, Maidstone, Strood, Gravesend, Tunbridge, Sheerness, Chatham, Town Sutton and Lenham.—By Richard Leggett of Strood [1795].



Christian effort was laudably put forth in this erection. It was said such was the zeal of the poor of the congregation, that they freely gave their labour in taking down the old meeting house, removing the materials, and rendering every service in their power, to save expense and forward the work."

Since writing the above sentence, I have been favoured by



*Drawn by E. Farley Cobb.*

Mr. Richard West, senr., with the loan of the original bill or costs for the erection of this Chapel. The truth of the assertion here made is amply verified in the copy of this interesting document, which is here appended. Mr. Richard West's father, it will be seen, was the builder who erected it.

"Mr. Leggett was succeeded in 1803 by the Rev. Thomas Drew, who laboured with acceptance during the period of 40 years. Through infirmity, he resigned the Pastorate, May 21st, 1843, and continued a member until his death, December 10th, 1853."

Mr. Drew's remains lie in a grave on the west side of the Chapel door in the little open space of which mention has been made. Affixed to the wall, is a neat stone tablet, which bears record of his virtues and pastoral work.

Above the entrance door is a gallery which is, and has been for years, unused. Fronting the spectator at the Southern extremity, are marks plainly discernible of the Pulpit having once occupied a loftier position than it does at the present day. The reason of its removal, and of the disuse of the gallery arises from the same cause, viz. :—the introduction of gas.

The Chapel not being built with such purposes in view, its ventilating properties were found to be at fault, and the heat generated so intolerable, that the pulpit had to be lowered and the gallery abandoned. Its acoustic qualities are singularly good. It will be a matter of surprise to many inhabitants of Strood to learn, that behind the Chapel is a schoolroom almost equal in extent to that of the original building. Additionally remarkable will it appear to many to learn that the site upon which this schoolroom stands was formerly the Chapel Cemetery, and the receptacle for its dead; a goodly number of old Strood residents sleep their last sleep beneath it. In the limited space behind the school, and in the narrow passage boundary on the eastern side are also several weather-worn tombstones.

The following is the most easily deciphered :—

“To the memory of Mr. George Thomas, of this Parish, who departed this life 25th January, 1820. He was beloved by all who knew him.”

This stone is at the immediate back of the school. It may be added that this graveyard has been long closed for interments. Another stone commemorates the decease on 1st August, 1825, of Elizabeth Sollitt-Cheetham, and on 26th October, 1826, of Mary Sollitt-Cheetham, both infant children of George and Elizabeth. Suspended, likewise framed and glazed, in the schoolroom, we find the following historical account, with its poetical accompaniment.

#### “ZOAR CHAPEL, SABBATH SCHOOL.

The first brick of this schoolroom was laid in the South corner by the Rev. C. D. Gawler, on Wednesday, February 26th, 1851, at six o'clock in the evening, when an address was delivered

and the following hymn was sung—composed by the Rev. C. D. Gawler, Minister and Pastor of Zoar Chapel, Strood.

## HYMN.

- “We lay this foundation with promise to the Lord  
And pray that His blessing may rest on His Word;  
May Pastor and Teachers be blest by His Grace,  
To teach little children His truths in this place.
- “May children be gathered and taught by the Lord,  
Renewed by His Spirit and blest by His Word;  
United to Jesus, by Grace, Peace and Love,  
And finish their journey in Glory above.
- “Oh what a foundation in Zion is laid!  
’Tis Jesus! On whom all this building is raised;  
No power can move it; it ever must stand,  
Secured by Jehovah’s omnipotent hand!
- “’Tis glorious! ’Tis precious! ’Tis Jesus our Rock!  
Imperiously safe against every shock,  
It stands so Majestic! it towers above  
The malice of Satan, by Sovereign love.”

Though little ruggednesses are apparent in some of the above lines, the composition is not devoid of merit, and is additionally to be commended, as it contains historical record of the building.

## COPY OF BILL FOR BUILDING ZOAR CHAPEL, STROOD.

Trustees of the Meeting House in Strood, by order of Crump, President, dr. to Richard West for Bricklayer’s and Plasterer’s Work, &c., to Rebuild the House.

1796.

February 7th.—Pulling down the old houses, clearing away and making the foundations, putting in the window frames, setting the stove in Vestry, and making good work damaged, altering of windows, &c.

	£	s.	d.
Myself, 9 days, at 3/4 .....	1	10	0
Man, 27 $\frac{3}{4}$ days, at 3/4 .....	4	12	6
Labourer, 31 days, at 2/2 .....	3	7	2
Man and two horses and cart, to help pull down and carry the timber away, 23 $\frac{1}{2}$ loads .....	1	3	6
100 of clout nails to hang the sashes, and nails to make the fence .....	0	2	0
27 hods of mortar and 5 hods of lime .....	0	11	6
1 load of chalk, rubbish and carriage .....	0	1	6
1 load of gravel and carriage .....	0	4	6
15 $\frac{1}{2}$ rds. 24ft. reduced mortar and labour to old bricks and pieces, at £3/15/- .....	50	19	1
113 6-guage arches, cut out of mame stocks, £3 per thousand, at 1/9 .....	9	18	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
524 of Turk pointing, at 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. ....	6	11	0

	£	s.	d.
2,112ft. of plain tileing, new ripped all but tiles, at 13/- .....	13	14	6
22 new corner tiles.....	0	3	8
109-5 yards lath plaister, 3 coats and floated, set and whited, at 1/7.....	8	13	4
60 yards lath plaister, 3 coats and floated, set and whited, at 1/6 .....	5	2	0
Flour for the shanderleer.....	2	12	6
132ft. run of plain cornice, 9½in. girt, at 9½d.	5	4	6
168yds. 7ft. of dubbing out and 3 coats, floated and set rending, at 1/- .....	8	8	9
6½yds. 1 coat rending, at 4d.....	0	2	2
4,450 best stocks and carriage.....	8	0	2
1,174 kilne bricks and carriage .....	1	19	11
5,582 common stocks and carriage.....	8	18	7
	<hr/>		
	£142	1	5½

March 18th, Mr. Crump paid twenty pounds.

April 11th, cash twenty-five pounds five shillings.

May 4th, cash twenty pounds."

It may be mentioned that "Meeting Alley" got its name from the circumstances of the early services of this sect being held in that place.

#### JOHN WESLEY IN NORTH STREET.

John Wesley one Sunday came to Strood and held a service in North Street, in the open air. He preached from the steps (the house has since had the ground floor lowered) of the Cage House (Miss David's barber's shop) to a large gathering, which his name, his cause, celebrity, and oratorical powers quickly caused to assemble. He accepted an invitation—offered him by Mr. Richard West, who built Zoar Chapel, great grandfather to Messrs. West Brothers—and dined with that gentleman and his family at the "Friary," now the residence of Dr. A. T. V. Packman, senr. That Wesley thus visited Strood is a circumstance well worthy of record.

#### UNITED METHODIST FREE CHURCH, FRINDSBURY ROAD.

Standing a little way back from the high road, and near to St. Mary's Vicarage, is the plain, unpretentious, but withal substantially-built erection, generally known as the "Frindsbury Road chapel." Though, to the writer, the spot possesses but few incitements as a desirable place for sepulture, yet its associations (which have wide influence), have brought about thirty persons

to take their final rest beneath the narrow belt of land that fronts and surrounds it. Various tablets mark their resting place, those to the memories of the families of Nash, Lilley, and Langford being chiefly noticeable. The history of the Chapel is contemporaneous with our parish Church, and is peculiar in its illustrations of destiny, and the Capulet and Montague proclivities of two families.

In the year 1811 Mr. Lilley, grandfather of Mr. J. S. Lilley, of North Street, opened his house, situated at Bill Street, "as a preaching place for the Wesleyan Methodists." This really was the stepping stone of that sect's introduction to Strood. It grew and gathered power. Mr. J. Lilley was manager to Mr. Joseph Brindley;\* the latter gentleman being a shipbuilder of Strood in a large way of business. It was Brindley who built the somewhat gloomy-looking mansion adjacent, now in the occupation of Miss Formby.

Mr. Brindley, who we may suppose favoured the same teaching, gave the ground for the erection of the Chapel, which in the year 1813 was built and opened at a cost of £1,400. The debt remained for some time over £1,000; it is now reduced to a mortgage of £300.

The family proclivities previously alluded to consist in the fact that Mr. Lilley was largely instrumental in the inception and building of this Chapel, whilst Mr. John Reader was with equal ardour—as an original trustee—working for the rebuilding of the parish Church, each regarding the other's work with some antipathy. About fifteen years afterwards Mr. Lilley's son married a daughter of Mr. Reader, and in still later years (Mr. Reader becoming blind and infirm) he passed his closing days with his daughter and her husband and died in their home.

In 1849 differences arose in the Wesleyan body concerning church government. The Wesleyan Conference, which was the national governing body, was possessed of wide and autocratic powers, which they used with no gentle hand the country through. In due time its drastic edicts fell upon the members of this community in Strood, with the result that an important body of dissentients left, and hired a large room formerly existent at the back of Messrs. Biggs' (old) brewery. Here for a considerable

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\* See "Our Industries."



time were their services held. The Conference tried all they could to establish a new trust for the Chapel, but failed. Finding themselves unsuccessful they then resigned all claim, and gave the new trustees power to sell the building.\*

This event brought the dissenting body back again to their old home and work, which they carry on to this day. Those who



WESLEYAN METHODIST JUBILEE CHURCH.

followed the fortunes of the Conference, built (under the auspices of the central body) the Chapel at the junction of North Street and Prentice Street, now owned and used by the Salvation Army. Finding it, as time went on, to be too small for their growing numbers they finally removed to the handsome and commodious pile erected but a few years since at the corner of Stonehorse Lane, now re-christened "Cliffe Road."

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\* Since the above remarks were written, this building has been offered for sale but failed to find a purchaser.

It should be mentioned that the "governmental polity" of the Wesleyan Conference has been considerably modified in the severity of its lines from what it was in former years.

#### NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF WESLEYAN METHODISM IN STROOD.

[By REV. VALLANCE C. COOK.]

Methodism, as an organised Society, appears to have been introduced into Frindsbury about the year 1800, although long before that there was a flourishing cause in Rochester and Chatham on the other side of the Medway.

As to who had the honour of originating the work is a matter still in dispute. One line of tradition refers it to John Wesley himself, and another branch refers it to the grandfather of the present Mr. J. S. Lilley, of Strood, who came into the district at the beginning of the century, and almost immediately opened his cottage for preaching.

At any rate, within a few years Methodism became a great force and power in the neighbourhood, which resulted in the erection of the Old Chapel in Frindsbury road, in the year 1813.

For more than thirty years this was the centre of a great religious movement that made its influence felt in every village and hamlet of the surrounding district. The Chapel had a crowded school and congregation, many coming great distances to attend the various meetings and services. The class meetings, which have been described as "the back-bone of Methodism," were largely attended, and preachers of the first rank in the Connexion frequently ministered to the people.

Then came the unfortunate movement of 1849, when the Church was convulsed by the great Reform movement, and here, as in many other places, terrible havoc was wrought. Nearly the whole of the members and congregation took the side of the Reformers, and the Chapel itself passed into their hands.

From that time the work at the old centre fluctuated very considerably until the end of the year 1897, when the Trustees, owing to the decay of the work, found it necessary to sell the Chapel, and now the old sanctuary is closed, being no longer Methodist property.

**For several years after 1849 no Wesleyan services were held**

in Frindsbury or Strood. The old members, very few in number, who adhered to the parent Body, worshipped and continued their membership at Bethel Wesleyan Chapel, Rochester. It was not until the year 1853 that steps were taken to provide a chapel at Strood, although it had been in the hearts and minds of many before that time. But the first real step was taken by the late Mr. W. Kimmins and Mr. C. Cornell on Sunday evening, January 30th, 1853. They were walking together from Strood to the service at Bethel, when they expressed a hope that ere long a chapel would be erected at Strood, Mr. Cornell stating that ground could be had. He further said that he would give £10 if something was done, and Mr. Kimmins said he would do the same. The next day, January 31st, Mr. Cornell wrote to Mr. Kimmins on the matter, and on the Tuesday they arranged to meet the next day, Wednesday, February 2nd, to see if they could secure a suitable site. They agreed upon a plot in North Street, 17ft. by 80ft., and paid down a deposit of £1. The same evening the matter was mentioned to the Rev. Philip Hardcastle, Superintendent Minister of the Rochester Circuit, who said the plot was too small. So that on the Thursday the adjoining plot was secured, and on February 14th Mr. Kimmins and Mr. Cornell paid down £97 between them for the site, the amount, less their own contributions, being afterwards refunded them.

On February 18th, 1853, a meeting was held at the house of Mr. Cornell to form a Trust, the following being present:—Messrs. Hardcastle, Church, Burton, Reader, Kimmins, Osborn, C. Cornell, and T. Cornell. The following persons were nominated to act with them as Trustees:—Messrs. George Williamson and Leinile, of Rochester; Chubb, of London; Hasel, of Maidstone; Wood, of Aylesford; Emery, of Gravesend; Clark, of Shorne; Snoad, of Cobham; Chesterton, of Cliffe; Bishop, Thompson, Dunn, Beeman, and Masham, of Brompton; and Mr. Turfe, of Hoo. The meeting passed the following resolution:—"That it is desirable to have a chapel in Strood, and in the spot selected." Arrangements were also made for collecting the money for the ground, but nothing further was done until March 24th, 1854, when it was decided as follows:—"That this meeting, having reviewed the whole matter, deems it expedient to defer all proceedings with respect to the new Wesleyan Chapel at Strood until after the Conference of 1854."

The whole matter, however, was left in abeyance until May 3rd, 1858, when a Trustees' meeting was held, with the Rev. N. Rouse in the chair. At this meeting it was decided to have a public tea and meeting to launch the scheme.

This took place on May 13th, and £44 15s. od. were promised towards the building fund. On the 21st the Trustees met again, and the plans of Mr. Keeling, architect, of London, were examined. The following decisions were arrived at:—(1) The Chapel must seat 170 persons; (2) Cost not to exceed £250; (3) The style to be neat; (4) Seats not to be fitted with doors; (5) The terms of the architect to be ascertained, and he be informed that stone can be easily obtained.

The next meeting was held on January 7th, 1859. In the meantime, negotiations had been going on with the Trustees of the Frindsbury Chapel, but on March 9th these were broken off, and it was decided to ask the Wesleyan Chapel Committee to sanction the plans as drawn by Mr. Keeling. This was done, and the chapel in North Street, seating nearly 300 persons, and now occupied by the Salvation Army, was erected. Prior to this, however, class meetings and preaching services were held, for some three or four years, in the house of Mr. and Mrs. W. Tansley, at Frindsbury Mill. These honoured people removed from Lincolnshire, and, on finding no Wesleyan services in the town, at once opened the doors of their house, and the place was crowded, week by week, by anxious and eager people. The success of the work here made it imperative that something should be done, and it was with feelings of the deepest thankfulness and praise that the new Chapel was opened in 1859. From the first the results more than justified the faith and hope of the pioneers. The Chapel was soon filled, and in less than two years it was found necessary to build a schoolroom. Fortunately, land was secured adjoining the Chapel, and during 1861 the School was erected at a total cost of nearly £240. These premises did splendid service for more than twenty years, but, as time went on, the constantly increasing number of worshippers made a larger and more commodious building absolutely necessary. Twelve or fifteen years ago the need was acutely felt, and during the term of the Rev. George Penman it was decided to make another advance—and this time it was to be of a still more

aggressive and daring character. A capital site was secured in Frindsbury Road, at the corner of the Stonehorse Lane, and the Trustees decided upon the erection of the commodious and beautiful Church that now adorns that commanding position. The Church is known as the Wesleyan Methodist Jubilee Church, and was opened on Wednesday, November 2nd, 1887, by the Rev. John Walton, M.A., President of the Wesleyan Conference. The total cost exceeded £5,700, and the Church has seating capacity for more than 700 persons. It has a lofty nave, and two aisles, with galleries round three sides; it possesses both tower and spire, rising to the height of 108 feet from the ground; the style is an adaptation of the early English. The Church is built of red brick, with Bath stone dressings; the seats are of pitch pine, varnished; and the roofs, internally, of open timber work.

As in the case of its predecessor, the erection of this large and handsome Church has been more than justified by its increasing congregation and membership. And to-day these are of the most encouraging character. The enrolled Church membership is nearly 300, the Sunday School numbers more than 600 scholars, the Band of Hope exceeds 250 members, whilst the Adult Bible Class on Sunday afternoons has nearly 200 members. Altogether the Church is in a most prosperous condition, and has just recently (1899) taken another step in advance. A large and beautiful hall ("Wesley Hall") has been erected, during the ministry of the Rev. Vallance C. Cook, at the rear of the Church, at a cost of £1,650. This is also built of brick, with Bath stone dressings, and will comfortably seat 450 adult persons. Through the generosity of the members, and a host of sympathising friends, the whole of the amount has been raised, and the new building opened amid great rejoicings. The hall has been built by Mr. H. J. Wyles from the plans of Messrs. J. W. Nash and Son, of Rochester, who were also the architects for the Church.

"Methodism is nothing if it is not aggressive," says one of our leaders, and the Methodists of Strood are determined to show that they possess the daring and genius of their fathers. But whilst aggressive it is not a proselytizing Church. Its policy and boast are to be "the friends of all and the enemies of none."



There are also two other buildings of recent erection in Strood, devoted to religious purposes, viz. :—

The Congregational Church, St. Mary's Road, built of wood and iron; Pastor, Rev. W. Harrison Towle; and

The Strood Gospel Mission Church, situate in Brompton Lane; the latter being built of brick.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### THE OLD WORKHOUSE.

“Now over the gate was written.”—*Bunyan*.

THE Rev. Caleb Parfect (see pp. 111-2 “Vicars of Strood”) left his mark upon the history of our Parish. He became Vicar in 1719.



STONE OVER DOOR OF OLD WORKHOUSE, STROOD.

Photo by A. G. Blackman.]

[Drawn by F. A. Stewart.]

In 1720, he made certain proposals to the inhabitants concerning the better regulation and governance of the poor of Strood. In 1725, after his ideas had found practical expression, he published a pamphlet of 24 pp., from which the following particulars are taken.\* Its full title is appended.

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\* For perusal and use of this scarce work, the author is indebted to the late Mr. Rei Fry.

“Proposals made in the year 1720, to the Parishioners of Strood, near Rochester in Kent, for building a Workhouse there. With an account of the good success thereof; And likewise of several Workhouses in Essex, etc. Published to encourage all large and populous Parishes to pursue the same Design; it being very advantageous to the Rich, as well as the Poor. By the Minister of Stroud.

“London: Printed and sold by F. Downing, in Bartholomew Close, near West Smithfield, 1725.”

A special vestry meeting, it appears, was called to consider the proposals, which our author declares were occasioned by “the necessities, misery, and distress of some families, the idleness and wickedness of others, and the heavy charge that lies upon this parish in supporting both sorts;” and then says he,—“As we find that necessitous persons increase, and will daily do so, unless some more effectual care be taken for a more regular Provision for them, than by the ordinary practice is, or can be done; it is therefore hoped, that the following proposals for erecting an House of Charity and Industry will be very acceptable to all good and publick-spirited Persons.”

To those who intended to offer opposition to the scheme, whether from selfish, or cantankerous motives; whether from blind prejudice, or direct ignorance; the rev. gentleman humbly appealed for a fair hearing, and hoped that objectors who disliked the design would offer their “reasons soberly and calmly against it, having no regard to any other ends, but such as ’tis intended to serve, viz.: The Glory of God, the establishing a more regular and comfortable subsistence for the poor, the promoting of industry and piety, and the common good of this large, necessitous, and disorderly parish.”

But now to the “proposals” submitted to the vestry. There were six of them:—

“First, That a large convenient House be built, wherein all Parish Orphans may be kept under a Master and Mistress; and lodg’d, fed, and wholly maintained in the said House. That these children be instructed in reading, &c., two hours every day; and afterwards be set to work, and bred up in habits of industry and diligence; which now, through the carelessness, perverseness, or foolish indulgence of their nurses (we find by experience) cannot possibly be done. Children of seven or eight years old, may earn two pence per day, others three pence; which, in this publick way of living, will go very far towards their maintenance. And this method will make us as happy in their services, as we have been unhappy through their parents or

nurses' vices. Besides, such as have been educated after this manner, and inur'd to labour and industry, will be more easily put out without any money, than other idle, unciviliz'd, wicked children, with a considerable sum. I think there can be no room for objections here; especially if it be considered how many of these poor creatures, for want of being brought up this way, come to be desperately miserable; beggars and vagabonds perhaps; and so continue all their lives. They die without instruction, and in the greatness of their folly they go astray.

"Secondly, that the aged, sick, and impotent poor be also provided for in this House. Here will be all necessary provisions and convenient and separate lodgings for them. They will assist, and be in some measure helpful to one another. And by living thus together, they will be much better subsisted, to their own comfort, and the Parish's ease and comfort, than they are at present. For 'tis well known that such poor often undergo extream hardships in time of sickness; they want nurses and other necessaries, suitable to their condition, and suffer very much, to the scandal of religion, and the great discredit of the Parish.

"Thirdly, that all elderly women, who may be only chargeable to the Parish for their house rent, should have convenient appartments here; but maintain themselves as before, by going out to work, to sell fish, &c., unless any of them may be willing to be wholly subsisted in the house, to help wash, brew, make beds, look after the children, and do such other offices as they may be wanted for.

"Fourthly, that widows and their children be likewise received into the House. There is now no better pretence for a large pension than a woman's having a pretty many children. Whereas several of them, with good care and management, might almost maintain themselves. The mother, if she can get more abroad, may only be lodg'd in the House, and buy her own cloaths and diet; but be obliged to contribute something to the maintenance of her children, unless she rather chuses to take their earnings and to provide for them herself.

"Fifthly, as this Parish is at a great expense every year, by carrying such travelling people, as fall sick in the place, to publick houses; it is propos'd, that such persons (during their illness) be accommodated in this House, where there will be always several women to look after them, and a proper room bed, &c., provided for such accidents. And the expense will be insignificant considering there must be a daily provision made for the House.

"Lastly, that the Charity School be annexed to the Work House, and the children be set to work part of their time. By which means the charge of having separate Houses, and two masters and mistresses, will be sav'd: and a common objection against the Charity Schools effectually remov'd, viz., that the children, by being kept to school several years without work, are not afterwards easily reconciled to it; tho' they have nothing else to live by but their labour,

“The advantages of this design will be very considerable to the Parish. The annual assessments for the poor, and our gift\* of £60 per annum from the City of Rochester, amount now to about £290 and 'tis not likely that the yearly charge of this House will exceed £10 per month, so it appears by several Houses in Essex, &c., in which there are as many poor, or rather more (I think) than we may expect to have in ours.

“We purpose to build the House with the £60 payable yearly from Rochester, it being (in the opinion of a very eminent lawyer) agreeable to the will of the donor of that Charity, as the inhabitants are no way capable of doing it themselves. And this will occasion the withdrawing of that gift for five or six years, to pay for the building. But notwithstanding this, the Parish will in all likelihood presently become great gainers by this undertaking; but they will be more so, when the debt is paid; and this £60 per annum come to be more properly and usefully apply'd, than it has formerly been. That Charity (I trust) will then save many a poor family even from coming to the Parish, as it will enable us to help them very considerably with respect to their children, more than we can now do by our subscriptions to the Charity School. For, if we neither feed nor lodge such children, yet we may instruct, cloath, employ, and place out all that need our assistance. And this method (as I said before) will preserve many a family from falling to poverty, and consequently be of great advantage to you. And this may also be allow'd to be an honourable way (I wish no worse was in fashion) for the rich to partake of charities given to the poor. In short, the great service of that ancient bequest will then begin to be very sensibly felt by everybody; whereas (I am sorry to say) the good effects of it hitherto have not been so generally perceiv'd.”

The Rev. Caleb Parfect was most sanguine as to the ultimate good results to be obtained from such a system. He says: “This Workhouse will prove an happy expedient to bring all idle people to such an habit of industry, that there will not be a beggar bred in the Parish; nor can there be a miserable person in the nation, if the same course be taken throughout it.” Then Mr. Parfect winds up the chapter with the following: “The regular life in this House, with an easie, moderate, and honest labour, and religious instructions, will even make it a nursery and school of industry and virtue, bring great honour to the Parish, and much comfort to every good man that shall sincerely engage in it.”

We shall see how far these sanguine expectations were fulfilled. There is also much matter in this old pamphlet

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\* This was, no doubt, the share which Strood then took of the surplus revenues of “Watts' Charity.”



touching these olden experiences of Strood that calls for consideration and reflection.

Soon after these proposals were made, the Vestry determined to build without more ado, and appointed seven Trustees to carry out the proposals. These worthies secured the services of a builder who agreed to build a brick edifice, of convenient size, for the sum of £360, and who consented to receive payment by six yearly instalments of £60, that being the amount the Strood people annually received from the Rochester Charity before mentioned. The Workhouse was begun in the year 1721, and opened in the following summer, and in the year 1723 we find the sanguine Mr. Parfect writing to the Secretary of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, giving him a most particular and glowing account of the success of the proposals submitted to the Vestry at the outset. These he deals with seriatim. The rev. gentleman says: "The first article relates to Parish Orphans: And they are happily provided for in these Houses. We have now 14 or 15 in ours; who are employ'd in spinning jersey by a person of the Parish, who twists it and dyes it, and then sells it for stockings; and some can earn 2d. per day in winter, and 3d. in summer. The officers receive their money, and provide everything they want. These children us'd to be kept in poor families at 2s. per week, and bred up in the grossest idleness and vice! But now they are inur'd to labour, and help maintain themselves, earning at least their diet. And by this method a great deal is sav'd to the Parish, and the children themselves virtuously and christianly brought up, and made fit for good services."

But Mr. Parfect wished it to be understood that spinning was not the sole industry of the Institution, "for," says he, "they are taught to knit their own stockings, and to make their caps, aprons, and shifts; to clean the House, make beds, to assist (as they are able) in washing and getting up the cloaths, dressing of victuals, and such other offices, as will make them good servants."

Our author proudly mentions the fact that "We put out one girl last week upon good terms, into a sober family, and shall do the same by the rest, as they become qualify'd;" and then he adds, "This proposal, as it takes place in Market Towns, and populous Parishes, will, I hope, save many a poor orphan from being ruin'd."

Caleb makes some strong remarks on Parish Officers in their

dealings with orphans. "We now find," says he, "Parish Officers too eager to get rid of them; and they place them out so young with little money (two guineas a common price) to sorry masters, that 'tis little better than murdering them. But when children are put into a way of contributing to their own maintenance, and may be kept in these Houses at little or no charge to the Parish, till they are old enough for trades or services; it can hardly be suppos'd, that officers will be so monstrously cruel as to go on in the old road of sacrificing them. Besides, I hope those gentlemen will also seriously consider farther, that God Himself defendeth the fatherless, and will surely be the avenger of all such as are so void of bowels of mercy towards them. The command is plain and express: Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; and my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless. Exod. xxii., 22, 23, 24. This barbarous practice might indeed be in a good measure suppress'd, if His Majesty's Justices of the Peace would sign no indentures, without enquiring into the age of the children, and the character and circumstances of their intended masters; or at least not without an Order of Vestry, sign'd by the Minister of the Parish (where such children live;) who ('tis to be suppos'd) will be very cautious and vigilant in so important a matter."

The above paragraph helps us to an understanding of our friend Caleb. Whatever may be thought of our old Vicar, this is evident: his *heart* was in the right place.

Mr. Parfect then proceeds to deal with the success of the second proposal, which related to provision being made in the House for the aged sick and impotent poor, and the rev. gentleman is happy in the consciousness that the result is quite satisfactory. His remarks, under this heading, are so quaint that we reproduce them in full: says Caleb, "We have now several very ancient men, that live as comfortably in our House, as any person in the Parish. They are wholly removed from the cares and troubles of this life, and have little or nothing to do, but to prepare themselves for the next. When they are sick, we have a convenient apartment for them, and some of the women of the House look after them: they have likewise an apothecary to attend them, and want nothing that their cases may require,

We have one man in the House about 56, who has been little better than a common beggar for many years. Some time ago he was brought from another Parish very ill, and ready to be devoured with vermin ; and all possible care was presently taken of him ; our apothecary attended him, and the officers provided new cloaths for him. And now unless he gives over rambling, and continues orderly in the House, doing such work as the Governours think him capable of, our next care will be to send him to an House of Correction.

“We have also a very old deaf woman in the House, who knits well, and is useful that way, considering her age. We have likewise several other women ; and some are able to wash, dress victuals, &c., and even the most infirm can reel, sew and mend the children’s cloaths : and are serviceable in one respect or other.”

We now come to his report on the third proposal, “that all elderly women, who may be only chargeable to the Parish for their house-rent, should have convenient apartments here ;” but, declares he, “we have not one of this sort ; tho’ before our House was built, that single article amounted to near £30 per annum, and occasioned a great deal of trouble to the officers of the Parish.” Evidently the “elderly women” were not in love with the arrangements provided for their comfort.

The fourth proposal, which provided for the reception of widows and their children, was also working satisfactorily, judging from the fact that only one woman, with her three children, had a room in the House—the mother going out to work, and the children earning sufficient, by spinning, to maintain themselves. One of the pensioners, who received a monthly allowance before, refused any longer to be under obligation to the Parish, “they being healthy, robust persons, they openly declar’d, that they would drink less strong beer, &c., and work their fingers to the bones, before they would come into the House,” and, shrewdly remarks Mr. Parfect, “they live better now without !”

In the fifth proposal it was suggested to take poor persons who fell sick in the street into the Workhouse, for treatment, instead of sending them to the nearest public house, as was then the custom. In carrying out this suggestion, a considerable sum was yearly saved to the Parish. But here let me quote our author : “We send now such poor travelling people, as fall sick

in our streets, to the Workhouse, and not to ale houses, as usual ; where large reckonings were presently run up, and such extravagant things done, that many have pretended themselves sick for the sake of being sent to such quarters. But since we have taken this course, we have not had half the trouble as before."

The sixth, and last proposal was, "That the Charity School be annexed to the Workhouse, and the children be set to work part of their time." This was accordingly done, and Mr. Parfect gives some interesting details of the nature and extent of the work as follows : "Very many advantages attend it. We gave before £25 per annum to a master and mistress, with two chaldrons of coals, and paid £6 a year house rent. But now, by having such a convenient room for the School in the Workhouse, that one master and mistress will serve for both, we save great part of this money, and apply it to a good use, which we very much wanted it for, viz., to place out our charity children to good trades and services. Several boys have already had the benefit of it ; and there are others who will shortly be qualify'd to receive it. This method is farther advantageous both to our charity children and parish orphans. For some of the former spin and earn 2d. and 3d. per day ; and so have not only their education, cloaths, and money, to place them out ; but partly maintain themselves, even while they are at school, by being thus set to work, and carrying home their earnings to their parents. The latter, viz., the poor parish orphans, have likewise the opportunity of good instruction with their labour, and are allowed sufficient time every day for their learning. 'Tis a great pleasure to me to visit them often, to see them sometimes industrious at their wheels, sometimes diligent at their books ; and to find them mornings and evenings devoutly praying to God for themselves and benefactors, and singing psalms praising Him for these signal mercies vouchsafed unto them. Among these children we have a poor girl, who, before she was taken into the House, was the most miserable wretch upon earth. Her face is sadly burnt and disfigur'd ; and being almost blind, she did nothing but creep about begging in the streets ; and such a lamentable spectacle, as, I think, was hardly ever seen. But, I thank God, there is a great alteration in her circumstances ; and she is now as happy, as before she was miserable. This poor creature has a good memory, and a soft pleasant voice ; and 'tis delightful to hear her



repeat Bishop Ken's Hymns, which her mistress has taught her." In conclusion, the Rev. Caleb Parfect hopes that he has shown how practicable have been the proposals; and their advantage to the community at large. He points out how the rapidly-rising rates have been checked in their growth—how, in fact, they have decreased. (Good old days!) Then he rejoices that the money spent by the House was circulating among local tradesmen, and finally promises some particulars of the rules of the House, and the method of keeping the books, "as soon," says he, "as I have time to copy them."

The time to "copy them" came and we here reproduce them.

At a Vestry meeting held in the Parish Church of Strood, on November 15th, 1722, the following articles or rules were agreed to:—

I. "That twelve Governours be appointed to direct the affairs of the Workhouse for one whole year; and to report the state of it at a Vestry, to be held once a quarter.\*

II. "That a weekly account be kept, in a book provided for that use, of all disbursements in the said House; and that the Overseers of the Poor do bring constantly to the quarterly Vestry an account of all their expenses out of the House, to be entered likewise in the said book, for the satisfaction of all the Parishioners.

III. "That a Bill of Fare be given by the Governours to the master and mistress of the House.

IV. "That the Governours visit the House by turns; two every day; and that whosoever fails of so doing in person, or by a deputy (substituted out of their own number) shall forfeit sixpence for every such default, to be dispos'd of by a majority of the said Governours.

V. "That certain orders be drawn up, relating to the buying of provisions; and likewise the behaviour of the people in the House; that it may not fail to answer the end of it, viz.: to be an House of piety, charity and industry.

VI. "That all proper enquiries be daily made by those, whose turn 'tis to visit the House, relating to the observance of those orders; and all complaints, grievances, &c., be minuted, in order to be laid before all, or a majority of the Governours

VII "That all the Governours meet at the Workhouse every Sunday, after evening service, to advise together upon the minutes, taken by them the week past, and to agree upon any fresh rules, as they see occasion.

VIII. "That if any difficult case happens, it shall not be

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\* These "twelve Governours" may be traced as the real origin of the "Strood Trustees."



determin'd by the two visiting Governours, but referr'd to the weekly meeting; or if it requires immediate dispatch, a majority of the Governours shall be call'd together on that occasion.

IX. "That all resolutions and steps, taken in this affair, be kept in a book at the Workhouse, for the satisfaction of any Parishioners, or the information of such as may be desirous to pursue the same good design in other places.

[This book would be interesting reading.]

X. "That the said Governours be diligent, and unanimous in this undertaking, avoid all contradictions and oppositions to one another, and to the rules agreed on amongst themselves: endeavouring to act with such exact harmony, that (tho' it be necessary to decide all controversies by the majority, yet) as far as is possible, every single act of each person may have the consent and approbation of the whole number concerned."

At the same Vestry the following orders to be observed in the House, were agreed to:—

I. "That the Bill of Fare be punctually observed by the master and mistress, until any alteration be made therein, by a majority of the Governours.

II. "That if the butcher, who is to serve the House in his turn for a month, or quarter, does not constantly supply it with such pieces of meat, as the Governours think most profitable for the use of it, the two persons who visit on a market day shall go to other shops in the Parish, where they may be best furnish'd.

III. "That all the shops in the Parish have their respective turns to serve the House; in case they sell as good wares, and as cheap as they do to other people.

IV. "That they always send notes of the weight and price with their goods; which are to be filed by the master, as soon as he has made proper entries of the said goods in the books of the House.

V. "That all bills be paid once a quarter by the Overseers.

VI. "That the grown people in the House have their respective offices or employments; and that those offices or employments be appointed by a majority of the Governours.

VII. "That the children spin jersey, and be moderately task'd; and if they are idle, and do not their tasks, or make great waste, that they go sometimes without their meals, and sometimes have corporal punishment, at the discretion of the master and mistress.

VIII. "That they be at work by six of the clock in the summer, and eight in the winter, and continue so, till they have done their daily tasks.

IX. "That special care be taken to prevent the children making waste; and that this article be particularly enquir'd into by the visiting Governours.

X. "That fit persons be appointed to reel the work; and

that they do it well and faithfully, without injuring the House or the person who employs them.

XI. "That each child have every day two hours to learn to read, &c., at the discretion of the master and mistress.

XII. "That there be prayers in the House, morning and evening, and a chapter in the bible, distinctly read before prayers; and that grace before and after meat be always said by one of the children.

XIII. "That certain hours be appointed and observ'd for prayers and meals; and that none of the House be absent at such times; and that all go to bed by eight in the winter, and ten in the summer.

XIV. "That all the children, and as many of the grown people, as can be spar'd out of the House, do constantly go to Church on Sundays, Holydays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and carry their bibles and common prayer books with them.

XV. "That neither children nor others, go abroad on Sundays, but continue together in the House, and read some portion of Holy Scripture, or a chapter out of the Whole Duty of Man.\*

XVI. "That the children be never suffer'd to go into the streets, or to play, unless they behave themselves well in the House and do their tasks.

XVII. "That none (either old or young) presume to go out without the master's or mistress's leave.

XVIII. "That particular care be likewise taken of the education, manners, and behaviour of the children of the Charity School taught in the Workhouse; and that their names be call'd over at seven o'clock in the summer, and eight in the winter half year, every morning, and at one in the afternoon; and if any be missing, to be put down with notes for tardy, or absent; and that great faults, as lying, swearing, stealing, playing at Church, truanting, &c., be also noted down in weekly bills, to be laid before the Governours every Sunday evening.

XIX. "That all the children appear then constantly before

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\* The following extract explains Mr. Parfect's feelings on such points:—"Memorandum: That as I came out of Church the 25th September, 1764, in the afternoon, I happened to see two or three fellows carrying a long ladder towards the back part of it, and on enquiring what the occasion of so extraordinary a phenomenon might be, I was inform'd yt one Mr. Meers, a plumber at Milton next Gravesend, being employed on repairing some lead on the Church, brought several men with him to measure or do some business relative to ye work in hand. Being surprised at ye audaciousness of the man, I desir'd Mr. Currey, the worthy Curate of Milton, to chastise him for it, which he did. And meeting with him myself yesterday, I also took proper notice of his impudence, and moreover told him he had forfeited 5s. for using his trade on the Lord's Day, which he promis'd to send by Mr. Nunn; and did, this 8th October, 1764. I desir'd Mr. Nunn to give 2s. to Mrs. Dollamore, two to Wid. Carryer, and one to Wid. Dummice, which he did immediately."—Extract from *Shorne Vestry Book*. The writer is indebted to the courtesy of the Reverend A. L. Coates, Vicar of Shorne, for these notes.

the Governours, to show the condition of their cloaths, and to be examined in the progress they make in their learning; that the master and scholars may have their due commendations, and the benefactors all the comfort they propose to themselves, by encouraging this design.

“Lastly, that the master and mistress use all possible care to promote peace and good order in the House: that they treat the elderly people calmly, and tenderly; and to lay all material complaints before the Governours without attempting to remove them themselves.

RESOLVED, that the articles agreed to at a Vestry, held the 15th November, 1722, with these and all other orders, that may be made hereafter, for the due management of the Workhouse, be always consulted by the visiting Governours; whereby they may be easily directed to make all proper enquiries, and to frame their minutes accordingly for the general weekly meeting.”

We therefore quote the “Bill of Fare,” an item which was punctually observed, week in, week out, by the Master and Matron, agreeably to the articles and orders decided upon at the Vestry on the 15th November, 1722.

#### THE BILL OF FARE.

*Sunday*.—Breakfast, hard bisket for the children, bread and cheese for the old people. Dinner, buttock of beef and pudding. Supper, the same as for breakfast.

*Monday*.—Breakfast, broth. Dinner, cold meat and pudding. Supper, bread and cheese.

*Tuesday*.—Breakfast, hard bisket for the children, milk-porridge for the old people. Dinner, double rands of beef and pudding. Supper, bread and butter.

*Wednesday*.—Breakfast, broth. Dinner, cold meat and pudding. Supper, bread and cheese.

*Thursday*.—Breakfast, as on Tuesday. Dinner, mouse-piece of beef and pease pudding. Supper, bread and butter.

*Friday*.—Breakfast, pease-porridge. Dinner, cold meat and pudding. Supper, bread and cheese.

*Saturday*.—Breakfast, as on Thursday. Dinner, thicken'd milk. Supper, bread and butter.

Not the least interesting portion of the Rev. Caleb's pamphlet is that devoted to “The Method of keeping the Books in the Workhouse.” Specimen pages are given from five of these books; the most interesting items follow.

Book No. 1 contains the yearly subscriptions to the Charity School, the disbursements, and an account of what children were placed out, and to what trades and with what sums of

money out of the Charity fund. From the sample page we learn that there were twenty children in the Charity School, whose parents were poor, but who were not in receipt of parish relief.

Amongst the yearly subscribers to the fund were "Ed. Colston, esq.," who gave £5; "E. Hall, esq.," two guineas; and "Mr. Pemble," who contributed £1.

Among the disbursements we find seven shillings and sixpence for "half a ream of fine paper," one shilling and sixpence for "ink," and twelve shillings for "cloaths."

We next learn that 3s. 3d. was the amount spent on July 20 1723, in "putting out a boy." One lad was put out as a baker, no expense being incurred thereby; another was placed under a fisherman, at a cost of 40s. to the parish; while a third was apprenticed to a hatter, for three guineas. With reference to the latter, a foot-note says:

"A guinea is promised this lad when he is half out of his time in case he behaves himself well. And some such encouragement will be given to all in order to make 'em good servants and good christians. A Bible and Common Prayer Book, &c., are given them when they leave the school."

Book No. 2 gives the names of all the "Poor persons and parish orphans that have been lodged and maintained in the Workhouse since the opening of it, Midsummer, 1722, with their age, time of their admittance, their employment, &c."

We gather from the particulars given that the oldest inmate was Esther Pennell, aged 82, and that she made herself useful in "knitting for the use of the House." Another octogenarian was one Edward Barry, but the poor old fellow was "impotent." Elizabeth Long, another inmate, did the sewing; while old Tom Brown practised the "soleing and heeling art." Another individual, named Ben (not Tom) Cat, made brooms. It appears he made these articles (sometimes eight dozen in a week) from September, 1722, till August, 1723, and then the Cat, we are informed, "ran away."

The parish orphans were carefully put out, either in service or to trades. One of these was apprenticed to a fisherman ["three guineas and cloathes"], while another, "Mary Holt" by name, "was put to a good service." A foot-note to the last item says:—

"This girl, being sixteen years old, was bound till she's 21

(according to law), and then her mistress is oblig'd to give her two suits of cloaths, and 40 shillings in money. We find by experience that 'tis the best way to *apprentice* such girls; otherwise they are apt to be often changing places, and so come but to little."

Now we come to a page from Book No. 3. This gives an account of the weekly disbursements. Here's a sample for one week :—

	£	s.	d.
Two pounds of butter .....	00	01	00
Six gallon loaves .....	00	04	06
Two barrels of beer.....	00	14	00
Nine stone and six pounds of beef, at 22d. per stone .....	00	17	10½
Leather to sole one pair of boy's shoes .....	00	00	09

Look at the price of beef! 2½d. a pound! and butter, too, at 6d. a pound!

During the week, above sampled, there were thirty persons in the House, and their average cost per head was 1s. 6½d., while their earnings by spinning was 8d. per head.

Book No. 4 is a record, in detail, of the weekly earnings. The charity girls were mostly employed in "spinning," although they were occasionally engaged in sewing and knitting. For spinning purposes, a pound of wool was delivered to them at a time, and the general earning was twopence a day, though some, more expert, earned threepence a day. These earnings they were allowed to carry home to their parents.

The parish orphans [they lived in the House] were also engaged in spinning, but their wool was not weighed to them—a little being given to them at the time, and *their* earnings went into the parish exchequer. They earned on the average twopence per day.

While the juveniles were kept at work, their elders were also busily engaged at such occupations as sewing, shoemaking, &c. We are told, for instance, that old Betty Long "made two shifts this week for the use of the House;" while M. Channon "made three boys' shirts." Those who could not sew or knit, "cleaned the rooms," or "made the beds." F. Ellis "keeps the children to work and eases the Master very much in this branch of the business;" while Tom Brown, afore-mentioned, is declared to have "made 2 pair of shoes, sol'd 3 pair, heel-pee'd and



underlaid 1 pair," all in a week. The book states that Tom did not lodge in the House, but "only victual'd there."

We now come to book No. 5, which "shews how the money expended in the House has circulated thro' the parish, and the annual charge." A note says:—

"Every tradesman sends bills with every parcel of goods, which are fil'd, and the goods enter'd in this book to each man's account."

From these accounts we find that bread, flour, and hard biscuits cost, for those years, £29 12s. 7d.; and that "butter, cheese, soap, candles, and other small wares" [these items are somewhat "numerously mixed"], amounted to £17 1s. 8½d. "Linnen and cloaths," for the year, cost £8 8s. 4d.; while four chaldrons of coals were consumed during the same period, at an expenditure of £4 6s. od. A year's beer came to £17 10s. od.; milk cost £2 8s. 6d.; while a charge of £34 12s. 5½d. was made for beef. A twelvemonths' supply of leather for shoemaking cost £5 10s. 10½d. And here's another charge—

"Mending wheels and reels, strong beer for  
washerwomen ..... £3 10s. od."

From the same book we learn that the Master's salary was £10 per annum, with "meat, drink, washing, and lodging for himself, his wife, and two children."

On an average there were 30 persons a week in the House for the year, and these were maintained at a weekly cost of about 1s. 8½d. per person.

Two Governors visited the House each day, and they were required to enter their names in a book kept for the purpose, together with any complaint, suggestion, or other matter they desired to make. At the usual meeting of Governors, which took place at the House every Sunday evening, this book was inspected, and matters adjusted for the welfare of the inmates. For instance, on Tuesday, the 3rd of April, 1723, the visiting Governors queried "If it may not be proper to alter the bill of fare for Saturday's dinner," and on the following Sunday evening it was resolved "That 12 penneworth of milk be bought to supply the place of a bullock's head for Saturday's dinner."

From these extracts it will be seen that honest old Caleb Parfect kept his promise with the Secretary of the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, in forwarding him par-

ticulars of the rules of the House and the method of keeping the books.

Mr. Parfect was a firm believer in the success and advantages of the system, which, says he, "we do and shall reap from our Workhouse."

It is quite apparent from the foregoing that Mr. Parfect fully expected and believed that our Millennium had begun with the establishment of this Institution in Strood.

Among the Historical Treasures of the Parish, is the Overseers' and Churchwardens' Account Book for the year 1764-5. It is of especial interest when the precedent jubilant ideals of the Reverend Caleb are contrasted with the stern facts which follow. The Book is headed—

"The accomp of monney disbusted for the use of the poor of the Parish of Strood and for other purposes relating to the poor way goers and other incidents charges that are unto belonging expended by Alexander Bridge and Bard. Martin, Overseers of the Poor of the Parish aforesaid, in the year of our Lord, 1764 and 1765."

Laid out by Alexander Bridge and Bard. Martin.

		s.	d.
May 12	A woman with a brocan [broken] arm ..	0	4
„ 16	Paid for sand .....	0	2
„ 16	A woman with a child and a pass .....	0	4
„ 16	Paid Bonick .....	1	0
„ 16	Yest .....	0	6
„ 18	Paid Mr. Gorter .....	0	6
„ 19	A woman and 3 children with a pass* ..	1	0
„ 20	Paid Bonick .....	1	0
„ 20	A woman and 4 children with a pass ..	1	0
„ 21	Yest .....	0	6
„ 22	A six woman and child .....	0	2
„ 22	A sick woman to go on with .....	0	2

The following entries are largely illegible owing to decay, for the book is frayed "like as moth fretteth a garment." The name of "Bornick" occurs with weekly regularity for the sum of rs., varied occasionally with the addition of the christian name, David.

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\* Under the Vagrancy Act all persons who could not produce evidence of means of livelihood, were liable to be whipped. Those whose poverty was their misfortune, not their fault, were supplied with an official paper—generally accompanied with a few pence, and "passed" on from town to town until their native Workhouse was reached; such a document was the "pass" alluded to. In 1685, persons coming into a Parish were required to give notice to the Overseers. In 1691, these notices were "ordered to be read in Church, so that the fugitive might be hunted down by anyone who objected to his presence."—T. W. Fowle: *The Poor Law*, p. 64.

		s.	d.
June 5	Paid Mr. Brown for a tub .....	8	0
„ 5	Give Dame Losan.....	1	0
„ 6	A lame man with a pass .....	0	3
„ 6	Paid Mr. Tomblin for a hundd. of fegets	14	6

The prices are interesting to compare with the market rates of the present time. The Tomlins were a family long established at Shorne, where they, up to within recent years, carried on the business of tanners. One of the family married a daughter of Mr. Caleb Parfect. The tombstone to their memory stands at the right hand of the porch entrance to Shorne Church.

“John Tomlin, of Shorne, a widower, and Elizabeth Parfect, of Rochester, spinster, were married by the Reverend Thomas Austen, of the Cathedral Church, of Rochester, December the 13th 1748. Present—Caleb Parfect, Vicar of Shorne, and father of the said Elizabeth Parfect and others.”—Extract from *Shorne Parish Registers*.

		s.	d.
June 8	Ginein [given?] armen [a man] and wife and child to goe oute with.....	3	0

Evidently our parochial authorities were inclined to be extremely liberal to all persons whom they could induce to “goe oute” as the swollen sums sufficiently indicate. All merely repetitive entries are omitted.

		s.	d.
June 14, 1764	A six woman and 3 children .....	0	3
June 16, 1764	A six woman and 2 children.....	0	3

The above two entries do not indicate that the bowels of compassion of our two Overseers were very deeply stirred by “six” (sick) women and dependent children.

		s.	d.
June 23	Gave Argents to crison [christen] his child .....	2	0
„ 25	Paid Farris, of Chattam.....	10	0
„ 27	Paid a six woman and 4 children .....	0	6

We may presume this was a more than usually pathetic case.

June 27	Paid for a pair of shuse [shoes] for Rutes gal .....	3	3
„ 27	Gave to a man to go oute of the house ..	1	0
„ 27	Paid Brown for bred .....	4	0
„ 27	Gave to a woman in the howse .....	0	4
„ 27	Paid Master wise.....	0	10½

Not too much encouragement for wisdom in this.

June 27	Bruing [decidedly a cheap item] .....	0	3
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June 27	Paid for making a gownd for Locher's gal [happy Miss Locher].....	s. d.	1 6
„ 27	Gave Dame Ginnins to go out with ....	2 0	
„ 27	Woshing [this appears very cheap] ....	0 6	
„ 28	A pure [poor] woman in the house ....	0 3	
„ 29	Paid Master Russell [happy man] to go oute .....	16 0	

Here follow entries that had pathetic sorrows for some poor souls.

		s. d.	
June 31	For cairn Wilson to the grownd.....	2 0	
„ 31	Laying Dame Mossey oute .....	0 6	
„ 31	For cairn Dame Mossey to the grave ..	2 0	
[Date obliterated.] Gave Robert Farris [presumably of Chatham] for small pox [!]		6 0	

Bravo, Farris. I should have been sorry indeed to take it at double the price.

		£	s.	d.
July 10	Paid Bornick [this is a drop].....	0	0	3
„ 12	Margit Cable, sick.....	0	1	0
„ 13	Paid Mr. Bouguist uppon the a fair of Mr. Steddel's is sarvent.....	0	2	0
„ 14	Sick family with a pass .....	0	0	4
„ 15	A pass .....	0	0	3
„ 16	To fetch Bornick Boy from Madein-stone .....	0	1	0
„ 22	Paid Webber the furst money after the payment of Mr. Eyls .....	0	3	0
„ 24	Paid for 4 weeks' wochen [washing] ..	0	1	0
„ 25	Gave to Sarey Backet to go to London ..	0	2	3
„ 25	Gave Miss Whiten to go to London..	0	2	6
Aug. 5	A lame man with a family.....	0	0	4
„ 8	A man with a brocan leg .....	0	1	0
„ 16	A woman big with child.....	0	0	6
„ 19	Gave to Miss Medley, by order of Westery [Vestry] .....	1	5	0
„ 23	Two weeks' woshen .....	0	0	6
„ 24	Give a woman big with child to go oute with .....	0	1	6
„ 25	Paid Wilyam Bean, of Canterbury ..	0	5	3
„ 25	Paid Webber .....	0	3	0
„ 27	Gave to the Famely to goe to the Fair ..	0	4	0

Whether this entry refers to Webber, or, may be taken to signify that the Overseers treated their families to these diversions at parochial cost, is a puzzle to the writer.

		£	s.	d.
Aug. 29	A lame man to go on with [little enough].....	0	0	4
„ 31	Gave sick woman to go oute with ..	0	1	0
„ 31	Sarey Backet, coming from the Aspitale .....	0	1	6

We now see on what errand poor Sairey had "gone to London." That her cure was not complete may be inferred from an entry on the following 3rd of September, where we are curtly informed at the cost of 1s., "Backet to go to London." Sairey proceeded thither once more. And, on the same day, "Wilyam Been, of Canterbury" draws another 10s. at the cost of Strood. On the 10th, "caring a man to the ground oute of house" absorbs another 2s., which, apparently, was the regulation fee.

Sept. 11	"Been, of Canterbury," down for 10s. 6d., and he		
	has another 1s. 4d. on the 12th.	s.	d.
,, 13	Yest.....	0	6

This appears a regular quotation week by week.

Sept. 13	Laying out a man in the house .....	0	6
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This also appears the regulation fee for this dreary office.

On the 20th, "Wilyam Bean, of Canterbury" has 3s., and on the 21st, "Rutes gal" has "a pair of pattens," which mulcts the Parish to the extent of 11d.

The "Bruing" this week was done for 3d.

On the 23rd, we learn that "a pint of ink" for parochial uses was purchased at an outlay of 9d. Two "weaks wassing" occurs here at 6d., and Jno. Humphrey "out of work" was assisted with 3s.

	More illegible entries.	s.	d.
Oct. 4	Keeping Dame Vennelsis family 4 days ..	3	6
,, 4	Paid for his (who?) coming from Welling	2	6
,, 4	Paid Mr. Tomlin for a renew corde .....	3	0

On the 8th October, 5s. 8d. was "paid Borman for bering Olechin."

Hereafter the entries grow in brevity if they do not gain in wit.

Bornuck shows up for his usual 1s., which was "pade" him on 13th October, and "Wilyam Been" takes his 3s. dole two days later.

On the same day we read that a "newman" was "pade" a certain sum (unfortunately not decipherable) "for being beadle." One can but regret that this record of Mr. Bumble's stipendiary emoluments are thus lost to the fame and immortality they justly merit.



Then comes the balance sheet for the year as follows:—

“A count of monneys received.”—Rec'd May £ s. d.			
12th, 1764, of the old Oversseers with the books.....	22	11	4
Oct. 29th, of Mr. Wats is charity .....	27	9	0
Received July 21st, 1764, of Mr. Robart Ellis upon Webers account the sum of 3 pounds 8 shillings in full to July 22nd, 1764.			
Due to the old Oversseers .....	2	1	0
July 10th. Reced of Thomas Mundy .....	0	2	0
July 22nd. Reced of Mr. Cox.....	0	8	0
Sept. Mr. Videon paid uppon Sairey Witing	0	6	0
Sept. 22nd. Reced of William Borman for old men .....	0	3	6

What follows is again undecipherable.

#### MONEY DISBUSTED (!)

	Page	the	id.	£	s.	d.
			1d.....	1	1	3
			2d.....	3	1	10½
			3d.....	3	13	10½
			4d.....	2	5	11
			5d.....	3	13	10
			6d.....	2	8	10
			7d.....	2	17	7
			8d.....	3	14	10
			9d.....	0	12	11
<hr/>						
Paid	Mr.	Taylor.....		1	17	10
		Martin .....		4	1	1½
		Hulkes .....		1	18	3
		Russell .....		0	3	3
		May .....		0	13	0
		Fisher .....		0	4	0
		Wilkson.....		0	5	0
		Brown .....		0	8	0
		Haymon .....		9	10	0
		Smith....		50	10	0
		Otly .....		2	11	9
		Masters .....		4	6	10½
		Masters .....		4	9	0
		Bartholomew .....		1	10	11

Items following are obliterated:

Over leaf, “Mr. Rogers” has the sum of £1 13s. 4d. to his name, and Messrs. “Martin, Goldick, Borman, Lidwels, Townsend, Parramore, Penn, Hosmer, Turner, Hopper, Hamton, Gare, and Asten,” with other before-quoted names, complete the list; whilst an eloquent item of £4 4s. 5½d. is recorded as “paid

the hospitable bill for Sairey Backet and Witing." Poor Sairey! I wonder if she ever got better?

Barnard Martin and Alexander Bridge are the next Parish Overseers, and the writing is more scholarly from this date, although the curious term "disbusted" graces the heading of their rather florid wording.

8th November, 1764, there was "spent after the vestry, 1s. 6d.," and "paid for toleing the bell, 2d."

Six seamen were relieved with 3d. each on the 10th.

The washing bill stands as usual at 3d. per week.

On the 19th, "Thomas Wilkinson was paid 3/6 for carrying a half-charding of coals to Cobham."

On the 23rd, "Mrs. Wats" receives 6d., and "gave a sailer" accounts for another 3d.

On the 4th December, 1764, "paid for a calving knife and fork for the use of the workhouse" is put down at 2/2, and on the 6th, paid for "Susanna Burch's lodging, 1s."

		s.	d.
Dec. 7	Paid John Crafet for swearing to his parish .....	1	0
"	Gave him at the same time .....	0	6
" 8	Paid Mr. Sanders, the coachman, for bringing <i>Sarah</i> (this time) Backett from Gravesend .....	1	6
" 10	Gave six castaway men .....	1	6
" 11	Half-a-pound of hog's lard and a pint of milk on the 22nd } Under 1s., but not legible.		
" 11	Gave a poor man and woman, big with child, to go out of town with .....	1	0
" 11	Paid Mrs. Doves for making of gownds .....	7	0
" 24	Paid at receiving Mrs. Hill's rent for the land at Upnor .....	4	0

On the 5th January, 1765, 3s. was "Paid for removing Robert Farris (of small-pox fame) and his family to Chatam."

Jan. 6 Paid for half-a-pint of wine for Mrs. Bonnett ..... 0 6  
(Not very dear, apparently.)

6th January sees the end of poor old Dame Ginings, who had long been a recipient of parochial assistance, as on that day "Paid 6d." for "laying out" this poor old creature is entered, and on the *same* day (they evidently lost no time) for "Carrings Dame Ginings to ye ground, 2s." ends her earthly record.

A rather striking entry is that of "Paid for a pot of beer, for Dame Pernal, 3½d." And no less so is one immediately following, viz., "Paid for lowences at ye chrisening of Andrew Friday, at Mr. Brooker's, 2s. 7d."

"Gave to castaways" appears again and again. The meaning of the phrase is open to various interpretations.

"Gave Mrs. Crasset, to go into Essex, 4s."

"Paid Mr. Filley for sweeping two chimleys, 8d.," on the 28th January.

A "Gile of Wine" was also given to Margaret Cable, but at what date is not to be made out.

Oh! Sairey! "For my charges for Sarah Backett, London, 8s. 3½d. [Queer caligraphy occurs here]. For things bought for Sarah Backett, 7s. 6d. Washing money, 2s. od. Carreing her to thee hosspittall, 1s. Paid for carreing her bed to the cart, 3d. Spent, a-going up, 6d. [Very moderate too.] For keeping the horse in London, 3s."

"Paid for a letter from Andover" [amount illegible.]

"March 18. Paid Mr. Munday, towards the cure of Mrs. Miller's childe's scold head, 10s. 6d."

"April 8th. Paid for bakeing, 6d."

"I settled with the book here" is a curiously laconic entry next following. Who the "I" was is not stated.

Queer and illiterate writing again. "Paid Mr. Tomlin for a summons, 4s. od." Law seldom appears as a cheap article. On the same day occurs a rather mysterious entry, "Paid for Gollop, 6d." We are also favoured with a charge of 6s. "for keeping ye book," and for "carring a parish corpass to ye ground from Mrs. Allchin's, in Cagg Lane." Some charge was made, but what, is lost.

"Received of Mrs. Hills, for ye rent of ye poor land, £7 10s. od.)\* The Upnor property.

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\* This item of rent refers to the Young and Pemble Charity Land, the income of which was for many years absorbed in the poor rates, and the valuable recovery of which Mr. William Collard and Mr. John West some few years ago achieved for the uses of the poor of Strood, and the income is now administered by the Strood Trustees for deserving persons. At great personal sacrifice of time and trouble, Mr. William Collard, of North Street, Strood, then one of the Parish Overseers, investigated this matter. He felt it to be a distinct wrong upon the parish that charitable benefactions for the

“Disbustments,” as it is headed, show a total of £104 18s. od., among which is an item charged by order of “Quarter Sessions, for ment taining of Rennals family at Darford, £5 8s. 6d.”

A number of old Strood names appear. “Paid Mr. Beadon, Minister, for the use of the churchyard, 24s.” Messrs. Filley, Boghurst, Lester, Batt, Cable, Willson, Martin, Hunt, Taylor, Webb, Videon, &c.”

Total money received .....	£136	13	5½
Total disbusted .....	£135	16	4¼
Due to the Parish .....	£000	17	1¼

JOHN GOLDSTON, Churchwarden.

ALEXANDER BRIDGE, }  
BARNARD MARTIN, } Overseers.

Very poor scribes indeed were these two worthy Overseers. John Goldston, as his exalted office behoved him to be, was decidedly the better penman, though even his was far from being “the pen of a ready writer.”

If reference be made to the “Articles” contained in the foregoing citations from Mr. Parfect’s book, it is plainly apparent that the *inception* of the Strood Trustees and their functions date from thence.

There is another parchment-covered volume date 1775 1857, which reveals something of the working of the old poor law system. Its first entry sets forth the fact that

“At a Vestry held this 26th day of October, 1775, it was unanimously agreed that as Mr. John Mullinder is dissatisfied with his pay given him by the consent of the parishioners, as well as the maintenance of his Son, a young man able to maintain

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deserving poor should be absorbed and paid over into the poor rate. He accordingly consulted the late Mr. R. J. Clarke, who was a more than usually astute man, and had given considerable study to matters of law. Mr. Clarke advised Mr. Collard to let matters rest as they were. This he did not feel content to do and consulted Mr. John West. Mr. West’s well-known vigorous energy was of great advantage, and the result was that the Charity Commissioners ordered the fund henceforth to be handed over to the control of the Strood Trustees. The result was regrettable. For this unique service to the parish the Liberal Party of Strood, who were then in the ascendant, gave Mr. Collard the cold shoulder, and turned him out of office at the next vestry. Truly a prophet is not without honour, save in his own country! Later on, by the wish of *both parties*, Mr. Collard was unanimously elected a life Trustee, whilst others at the same vestry had to put up with a contest. Thus poetical justice has been meted out, and Strood possesses to the present day the advantages of Mr. Collard’s well-appreciated services.

himself. He is desirous of being discharged from the said House, and also his Son.

"They are therefore discharged accordingly.

Moses Roots\*, Churchwarden.,

J. Hudson } Overseers."  
Wm. Glover }

John Boghurst, Jas. Hulkes, and John Goldstone,

The signature of James Hulkes is finely and boldly written and is embellished with ornate flourishes indicative of excellent penmanship, which its possessor evidently did not care to hide beneath a bushel.

The next entry enlightens us as to the stipend and other emoluments, which, from the foregoing, were inadequate to retain the services of Mr. Mullinder. It is as follows:—

"At a Vestry held after due notice, the 20th day of June, 1776, we, whose names are hereunto subscribed, have agreed and do agree with Sarah Clark, to act as Mistress in the Poor House for the Parish of Strood, allowing her eight pounds per year and two pounds per year for teaching the poor children in the said House" [how would our Churchwardens regard to-day's School-board and other such like expenditure?] "and it is further agreed that the said salary (?) shall be paid quarterly out of the poor rate by even and equal portions, and the said salary and duty to commence on the twenty-fourth day of June, 1776. And Mrs. Sarah Clarke further agrees to give one quarter's notice for quitting the said House and the parishioners agree to give one quarter's notice, and it is hereby agreed that Mr. John Mullinder is to act as assistant to the said Mistress as he hath done heretofore, and the Officers not to pay him more than four pounds per year for his trouble, out of the poors rate."

The name of Sarah Clarke, the female dominie, is signed at the top by the same hand as made the entries, whilst J. Bowes signed in graceful characters that literally swim along supported by billows of curving flourishes.

On the 7th March, 1779, a vestry decide to indemnify the Parish Officers for all charges they may "incline" for

"Proceeding according to law against James Ward and Henry Donbavand for lodging and harbouring idle and disorderly people, which has been and are still lyable to bring further charges to the Parish.

Signed by us,

JOHN M'COWAN, Churchwarden,

EDWARD FARTHING, Overseer."

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\*Whether "Rutes Gal" who had the parochial "Shuse" at 3s. 3d. is to do with this gentleman, we do not know.



Messrs. J. Boghurst, J. Hulkes (ornate as usual), J. Howes and Joseph Thompson, as parishioners, attest their thorough agreement with these sturdy resolves.

This resolution was backed by another on the 8th February, 1781, when the vestry resolved in similar terms to prosecute

“Any one inhabitant of this parish who lodges or permits any stranger or inmate to reside or dwell in their houses more than one night at one time,” and these offending parishioners are warned that if “their lodgers fall sick then that the person who entertains or receives such lodgers shall bear every charge attending the same.”

And William Wilson, Edward Farthing (Churchwardens), Thomas Whiffin, Barnabas Howes (Overseers), with James Hulkes, Jno. Boghurst, Thomas Barrow, William Peen, Thomas Cobb, John Hodges, James Batt, and John———somebody—heaven knows who (for the signature looks as though written with a butcher’s skewer), with Messrs. Simon Friday, William Burch, William Filley, William Whitting, Thomas Hatton and John Martin, attest as parishioners, their agreement with these draconian laws.

Possibly a misgiving has already crossed the reader’s mind that Mr. Perfect’s system failed to realise all his sanguine expectations. Such doubt is more than justified. Apparently, judging by the evidence these old books afford, there was no subject upon which such unanimity existed as a desire to economise the expenditure this matter involved. On the 16th February, 1785, a fresh committee was appointed to “make regulations and enforce orders respecting management of the Poor House, as shall be for the benefit of the said parish.” Though the Vestry had decided upon twelve members for this body, they then chose fifteen, and it was resolved that if one died, or refused to act, another should be chosen in his place. To this resolution more names are appended than to any previous vestry.

On the 20th July, Leonard Lester and Sarah, his wife, were appointed Master and Mistress. Their united salary was £15 per year, and they were to teach the children “two hours each day.”

Again, November 20th, 1802. Weekly payments to persons “residing out of the Poor House having risen to a great height,

and conceiving that many impositions are practised on the Parish," the Vestry decided that on the next Saturday these payments should cease, and that all persons "requiring relief from the Parish shall be received and maintained in the House."

And once more a crowd of witnesses, exceeding all ordinary occasions, by their signatures cry "Amen!"

21 April, 1803. Another such vestry.

15 April, 1805, 1s. per week was allowed ——— "Weekes, widow, as a recompense for her trouble in teaching the children in the Workhouse." Good old times!

Following is the week's list of Pauper Relief for 17th May, 1810.

	s.	d.
Charlotte Stiggins, widow, one child .....	1	6
Eleanor Coomber, „ 3 children .....	5	0
Sarah Weeks, „ .....	1	0
Mary Shorter „ 4 children .....	5	0
Elizabeth Mitchell, „ 2 children .....	2	0
Sarah Corbut „ .....	1	0
William Strutfield, a wife, and 3 children.....	5	0
Thomas Whiting (allows the Parish £20 per annum) .....	1	6

[This is rather curious to pay over 7s. per week to obtain 1s. 6d. ?]

	s.	d.
Mary Lee, for her foster daughter .....	1	0
Lucy Farmer, widow, 2 children .....	2	0
Elizabeth Boomer, very aged .....	3	0
William Butmore, for his wife and child .....	1	0
Amelia Simmonds, for her child .....	2	0
Mary Griffin, 5 children.....	3	0
Elizabeth Carr .....	2	0
Mary Norman (wife of James Norman), 3 children .....	3	0
Nathaniel Lowe .....	2	0
John Lowry, aged.....	1	6
Eleanor Cable and her sister .....	2	0
Susanah Foreshew .....	1	0
Sarah Watts .....	2	6
Mary Job (husband at sea, 4 children) .....	4	0
Eleanor Nowland (2 children) .....	1	0
Elizabeth Martin (widow, aged) .....	2	0
James Skudder (large family) .....	3	0
Elizabeth McFaggan (aged) .....	1	6
Mary Russell, widow .....	1	6
Frances Taylor (widow, 3 children) .....	4	0
Sarah Cogger, widow, 1 child .....	1	0

Weeks—widow of Robert—allowance taken off	s.	d.
Widow Hickman .....	2	0
John Page, senr. (aged) .....	2	0
Thomas Wotone (America) .....	4	0
[This is curious, paying a man in America!]		
William White, 4 children.....	2	0
Francis Ray, St. Margaret (large family) .....	4	0
Townsend—wife of James—(husband at sea) ..	2	0
Amelia Wigley (widow and 3 children) .....	3	0
Robert Boreman, per week.....	1	0

John Reader, Joseph King, Thomas Dawson, James Bridge, Charles Bathurst, John Lash, Thomas Wood, John Stubbersfield, David Day, and J. Gibbs attest this sheet.

This old Workhouse was repaired, altered and enlarged out of parochial funds borrowed under the local Act of 1812.

Jubilee of George III. (1809):—At Strood a subscription was made by the inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood, whereby upwards of £230 was collected, by which nearly 5000 of the poor were supplied with 5,543 lbs of meat, and 115 bags of potatoes.

Old Acts of Parliament form a curious study, as witness the following:—

During the reign of Charles II. in England laws with regard to artificial aids to beauty were very strict. It is interesting to note this curious Act of Parliament, which was passed in the year 1670: "That all women of whatever age, rank, profession, or degree, whether virgins, maids, or widows, that shall, from after the passing of this Act, impose upon and betray into matrimony any of His Majesty's male subjects by scents, paints, cosmetics, washes, artificial teeth, false hair, Spanish wool, iron stays, hoops, high-heeled shoes, or bolstered hips, shall incur the penalty of the laws now in force against witchcraft, sorcery, and suchlike misdemeanours, and that the marriage, upon conviction, shall stand null and void."

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### THE OLD WORKHOUSE.

*From the Journals of the Trustees.*

"The history of Poor Laws, down to recent times, is one long melancholy record of admitted and repeated failures to deal with evils that recur with monotonous persistency, or break out in new forms, or evade the best meant schemes for putting them down."—*T. W. Fowle: The Poor Law*, p. 16.

"This is your charge; you shall comprehend all vagrom men."—  
*Much Ado About Nothing.*—*Shakespeare.*

THE signed Roll of the Strood Trustees is made up of many folios of parchment, grimed with use, and yellow from age. It does not, unfortunately, deal with their actual beginnings, but from 1819 to the present day, it bears the signature of each Trustee as it is subscribed at the foot of the oath of office.

This Roll is headed the "Strood Poor and Church Act," a very just description of the Provisions of the Act of 1812. The preceding chapter bears full record of the establishment, by Caleb Parfect, of our old Workhouse, with instances of its working.

The duties brought upon the Trustees by the Local Act of 1812 were manifold in character. Though a systematic division is somewhat difficult, it has been thought best to follow, by itself to its close, the fate and doings of the old Workhouse. Such items will therefore be inserted as they occur in these Journals.

It is worthy of mention that the Parishioners met in special Vestry on the 29th June, 1810. It was then resolved to apply "to the next Session of Parliament for an Act for enlarging the present, or providing an additional Workhouse for the Parish of Strood. Among the seventeen names of Parishioners appended to this resolution of the Vestry, ten are included in the original body of Trustees specified in the first clause of the Act of 1812.

Read in connection with the Vestry of August 14th, 1811 (see chapter on the old Church), it is quite clear that the resolve to apply to Parliament arose, in the first instance, out of the troubles brought upon the Parish by its pauper liabilities.

These burdens were added to by immigrant casuals passing on tramp through the Parish, of which Strood, by its geographical situation, came in for a good share. The poor rate was always heavy—rising from 1s. 6d. to 2s., 2s. 6d., and even 3s. in the £. Though the assessments were low, such imposts formed a grievous burden. These troubles are noted at considerable length in the preamble to the Act itself, which recites the various artifices resorted to by the inhabitants to escape these exactions. Read in the light of the Rev. Caleb Parfect's glowing anticipations they form a striking object lesson upon the difference practice often exhibits as against theory.

18th June, 1812. Elizabeth Johnson is charged with fraudulently obtaining by false representations an order for 9s. per week from the Reverend James Jones. As Elizabeth already had an order "bearing date the 28th May, 1812," for 6s. per week from the "Mayor of Rochester,"\* our Trustees felt some natural wrath against this astute person.

10th December, 1812. Two offending tailors, Edward Vergo and James Newman, are to be advertised "in the *Hue and Cry* for leaving their families chargeable to the Parish."

4th July, 1813. One hundred bills ordered to be issued to Parishioners cautioning them against "lodging vagrants and common beggars." Penalties incurred by this offence occupied a conspicuous position in these documents.

8th July, 1813. Workhouse contracts :

Beef, 6s. 1d. per stone. Mutton, 10d. per lb.

Coals, 39s. per chaldron.

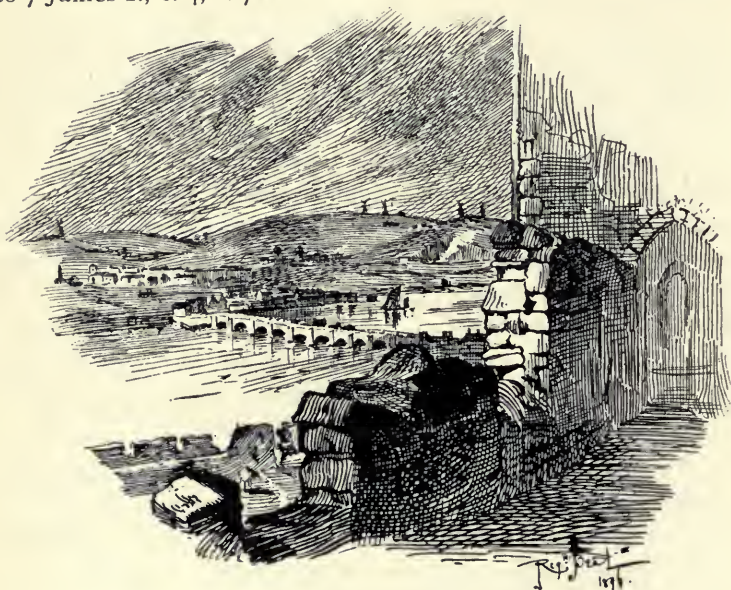
14th October. "Ordered that a *fourth part* of the bills owing to tradesmen which were delivered to *Easter last* be paid! and a Poor Rate of 3s. in the £!" £1,155 2s. 11d. was the sum thus owing. The financial condition of the Parish may be gauged from the following accepted tender of Mr. Robert Horsnail, for flour, where we read that, "in case the Trustees pay the amount of the bill for such flour on the expiration of three months, Mr. Horsnail proposes to make a deduction of 1s. per sack."

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\* By an old Poor Law Act, about 1721, Justices were allowed superior powers over the parochial officials. By this clause, or by its perversion, paupers known to the Overseers as unworthy of help, made application to the Justices, to whom their characters were unknown, and so obtained orders for relief which the Overseers were obliged to pay. From this system sprang one of the worst of the countless abuses of Poor Law Relief. The case of Elizabeth Johnson forms an apt illustration.—See Chapter III. *Poor Law*, T. Fowle; Macmillan, 1881.



3rd February, 1814. Hannah Welch, aged 69, to be "kept upon water gruel for three days, and no other diet allowed." Hannah had used "profane language" in the "House," and at the same meeting, "Mary Carr, spinster, belonging to the Parish, and now maintained in the Workhouse, and being the mother of three illegitimate children," is ordered to be punished agreeable to 7 James I., c. 4, s. 7.\*



STROOD, FROM ROCHESTER CASTLE.

*Drawn by R. J. Beale.]*

*[From an Old Print in British Museum.]*

3rd March. Nine persons summoned for arrears of the 3s. Poor Rate.

7th April. The Overseers borrow £500 of the Church Money "at interest," and apply it "in discharge of the Tradesmen's bills." On the 5th of May following, a second £500

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\* "An Act for the due execution of divers laws and statutes heretofore made against rogues, vagabonds and sturdy beggars, and other idle persons.

Section 7.—And because great charge ariseth upon many places within this realm by reason of bastardy, besides the great dishonour of Almighty God, be it therefore enacted by the authority aforesaid, that every lewd woman, which after this present Session of Parliament shall have any bastard which may be chargeable to the Parish, the Justices of the Peace shall commit such lewd woman to the House of Correction, there to be punished and set on work, during the term of one whole year; (2) and if she oftsoons offend again, that then to be committed to the said House of Correction as aforesaid, and there to remain until she can put in good securities of her good behaviour not to offend so again."

is thus borrowed, making £1,000, from which fund it was ordered that all Tradesmen's accounts "delivered previous to 18th October, 1813, be finally discharged."\* A very cheerful picture. The office of Overseer was not a desirable situation at this time. They secured many grumblings, and received but few thanks.

3rd November, 1814. Workhouse Contracts:—Beef, 4s. 6d. per stone; Mutton, 9d. per lb.; Seconds Flour, 54s. per sack; Malt, 10s. 6d. per bushel; Men's and Women's Coffins, £1 7s.



STROOD TO-DAY, FROM ROCHESTER CASTLE.

*Drawn by R. J. Beale.*

each; Derby Cheese, 8½d. per lb; Tub Butte1, 1s. 1d. per lb.; Moist Sugar, 11½d. per lb.; Candles, 12s. 3d. per dozen lbs.; Soap, 94s. per cwt.; Salt, 38s. per cwt.; Milk, 1s. 4d. per gallon.

9th February, 1815. Henry Durling, having "illegally" returned from the Parish of St. Margaret into Strood, is to be prosecuted. Oh, liberty!

15th August, 1816. The thanks of the Trustees were "given to Mr. James Cooper,† for his honest and upright conduct in his

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\* There is no evidence in the Trustees' Records that the whole of this money was ever repaid.

† The Coopers formerly held the land now covered by the present North Aylesford Strood Workhouse. At the corner of Gun Lane and Brompton Lane was an immense Parish pond, known as Cooper's Pond. One branch of this family were fellmongers, what is now Strood Square, being then the warehouses and workshops of their craft. On the decay of their business these were converted into their present uses as small tenements.

The Coopers were an old Strood family, and are, happily, represented by

office of Overseer (1814), who also . . . . subsequent to . . . . that year, did conduct himself worthy of the situation and confidence reposed in him." Bravo, James! Such an entry is very unusual reading among these chronicles.

7th November, 1816. Overseers prepare a list of paupers "who are proper to be employed by Messrs. Hulkes and Hopkins in emptying the pond belonging to their mill. (Particulars of this mill appear elsewhere.)

13th November. Trustees resolve to buy "butchers' meat" at Rochester or Chatham, "unless the butchers in the parish supply meat at the same price."

8th January, 1817. Poor Rate, 2s. 6d.

We have also a weighty resolution of our Trustees taken on the day following, when they enact that the paupers shall orderly

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living descendants resident in Rochester. From an old MS. book in the possession of Mr. George Cooper, in the Rochester Postal Service, kindly placed at my disposal by this gentleman, the following interesting memoranda is extracted:—"Thomas Cooper, the son of Edward and Mary Cooper, was born at Bill Street, Frindsbury, 18th September, 1785. My poor mother died . . . . when I was very young. I scalded my leg when I was ten years old, and kept my bed five months. After that I was put to the water upon liking, and as we was going to Portsmouth we was taken by the french when we came out of ramsgate harbour when an 150 sail (?) and only 2 was taking. On the 4th February, 1798. We was taken into boulogne in france. It was about 10 o'clock at night, and doleful night it was. I was fritened to death. They fired their guns at us." Unfortunately, no record is given of the manner of his release.—"Dic Horton was transported for 15 years, 1845."—"Dic" Horton's offence was malversation of Post Office Funds. Horton's wife was a noted Strood beauty in her day, she lived at what is now known as "The Anchorage."—Mr. Everest bought the Mills (Frindsbury Wind Mills) for £2,200, October 16th, 1844.—Mr. Cobb, town councillor, 20 ahead 1st November, 1844.—Mrs. Cobb died 8th November, 1844.—The Railway opened 10th February, 1845 (?) My master lowered my wage to 12s. per week, 3rd March, 1845.—Mr. Walters mill was blown up on 11th May, 1845. The boyler went up in the air and fell a 100 yards of 2 feet.—A Bridge\* was opened 1st November, 1845, over the Railway to walk over.—A very high tide, 11th December, 1845. [This is a remembrancer of an old Strood scourge.]—The South Eastern Company took the Railway of Rochester and Gravesend, 26th September, 1846. The railway was stopt from running through the tunnel on 12th December, 1846. The Railway opened thro' the tunnel 23rd August, 1847.—A woman was found murdered in the fair field, October 8th, 1848.—The Railway was open to London, 30th July, 1849.—The first pair married at Zoar Chapel, 2nd July, 1850.—A very high tide, 29th January, 1850.—Mr. Gibbs died 22nd February, 1850.—Rochester New Bridge begun March 18th, 1850.—The first pile of the Railway bridge was driven on 30th June, 1854.—The Railway was opened to Maidstone on 18th June, 1856.—Rochester New Bridge was opened on the 13th August, 1856. It was nearly six years a building."

\* Bridge to cross the Railway. The original South Eastern Station was nearer the River, the spot now occupied by the cattle and goods sidings. From the roadway debouching into Frindsbury Road, then known as "Dark Lane," a bridge was erected for foot passengers to pass over the line, cross the canal and follow the path—of immemorial antiquity—to Upnor.

and regularly march "two by two" to and fro on the Sabbath day to church. That without "satisfactory reason," proof whereof shall lie on them, shall no pauper be excused his attendance thereat on pain of their severe displeasure. It is likewise ordained that the men shall, in church, "sit by themselves, and the women the same." They are to be "clothed in a proper and suitable dress, each in one of the same colour and texture, and the whole of the women and girls in clothing alike." Thus clad, did these fortunate, or unfortunate, individuals, on the Sabbath day, duly attended by two Trustees who, *per rota*, were charged to walk with them, hie themselves to church for the salvation of their souls, and to avoid the unpleasant consequences that absence would have assuredly brought upon them.

22nd January, 1817. A committee was formed to consider what manner of meat and drink shall be allowed "the persons in the House." How these above-named individuals fared, let the following, resolved upon at the next meeting, certify:—

## DINNER.

Sunday—Meat, without pudding.

Monday—Bread and butter.

Tuesday—Head and broth.

Wednesday—Pork (or bacon, if no pork), and pudding for the children only.

Thursday—Meat.

Friday—Head and broth.

Saturday—Bread and butter.

## SUPPER.

Sunday—Bread, and an ounce of butter for a grown person.

Monday—Bread, and two ounces of cheese for a grown person.

Tuesday—Bread and butter.

Wednesday—Bread and cheese.

Thursday—Bread and butter.

Friday—Bread and cheese.

Saturday—Bread and butter.

"Thomas Ruck, a pauper," was ordered to "build a watch-box with a hatch in front, to stand at the entrance-gate to the Poors-house, leading out of Gun Lane."

The 13th March, 1817, records that "William Thomas, Richard Hall, John Wigley, and John Clarke, paupers, employed on the highways, having behaved very ill in being idle, not working more than three hours in a day, and frequently become



intoxicated, and having treated the master and mistress of the Workhouse very ill,"

Resolved—That neither of them be permitted to leave the House upon any occasion whatever, until further orders, and that William Thomas and Richard Hall, for the space of fourteen successive days from this time, be not allowed any meat or beer, but on each day broth or water gruel.

Poor Rate, 2s.

10th July. Poor Rate, 2s. 6d.

"Francis Lushington Tress having attended the Trustees respecting the illegitimate child born to him by Elizabeth Fleet, now in the Workhouse, and having agreed to pay the sum of twenty-five pounds by the instalments mentioned in discharge of any further demand upon him on account of such child," viz.—£5 down, and £5 every six months until paid, it was "resolved that the above proposal be accepted, and the proper security be prepared," and exit the inculpated Francis, a sadder and let us hope a wiser man.

Section lviii. of the Local Act of 1812 gives the Trustees full powers for such transactions, and such compounding for illegitimate children form a frequent entry.

At the next meeting on the 1st of August following, we have a lengthy report from the supervising committee last appointed. "Strictest economy, consistent with the actual necessities," is fervently enjoined; certain drastic rules are laid down governing the hours and modes in which supplies are to be received at the Workhouse. A book "with an accurate account of the expenditure of each particular article" is to be kept, and finally the following slaughter of the sumptuous January bill of fare is enacted, viz., as thus—"That the Soup ordered for Monday and Friday be made of the liquor in which the beef of the preceding days were boiled, with any remaining portions of beef or other fragments to be used with Scotch barley, vegetables, and pepper. That beer be brewed every fortnight; and that three bushels of malt do make a sufficient quantity of beer to last that time, it appearing that the consumption for one week will not amount to more than 94 gallons for 90 persons, the number now in the house. That the bread should be baked in loaves of such size as will cut out into eight or twelve equal parts, weighing each five ounces



for the men and women, and four ounces for the boys and girls. That the beef remain in salt one week before boiled, and that the same consist chiefly of buttocks, under buttocks and naval pieces, with oxheads for the soup on Saturdays," and these Draconian enactments significantly close thus—

"Resolved and ordered that the above recommendation be strictly carried into effect," and not resting content with this order, Messrs. Bathurst, Freeland, Rayson, Beckett, Charlton, Edmeades, Cooper, Buck, Butcher, and Goldston were set apart as a Committee to carry out this resolution, and to defend Strood from the 90 paupers that then gnawed upon its financial vitals.

27th November. Thomas Walker, "a pauper," broke into the store room "and took provisions therefrom." Thomas is to be "prosecuted at the next Quarter Sessions at Rochester." We may safely assume that Mr. Walker was anything but satisfied with the Spartan like *menu* detailed above.

18th December. The Son of "Lucretia Clapshoe" ordered to be apprenticed at a cost not to exceed £4.

11th February, 1818. Three shillings and a pair of boots allowed to James Johnson, a boy of 14, "late an apprentice to Uriah Faussett . . . but discharged by the Magistrates on account of the brutish treatment he received from his master." Every reader will rejoice at the poor lad's escape.

Poor Rate 2s. ; 2s. 6d. during this period.

3rd December, 1818. Elizabeth Kid, widow, having struck Frances Brotherton, also a widow, "with a pair of tongs," this sportive creature was ordered to "the iron cage of the Workhouse for twelve hours."

21st January, 1819.

#### A GRATEFUL PAUPER !

"Ordered that Henry John Thompson be permitted to leave the Workhouse, and upon quitting the same to have a pair of shoes, a pair of stockings, and 10s. in money ; and it is further ordered to *stand upon record* that he has been grateful for the comforts and assistance which he has received during his illness in the House ; and upon the above order being made he expressed himself in a becoming manner to the Trustees to that effect."

Bravo ! Henry John ! and granting that he was not of the

tribe of Uriah Heep, his sentiments do him infinite credit ; and do also our parochial governors no dishonour.

No doubt—indeed the book is evidence of the fact—grateful paupers were scarcer than thankful lepers, for we do not find them to the proportion of even one in ten.

#### REVERSING THE PICTURE.

6th May. For behaving “disorderly in church on Sunday last,” John Hills, a pauper, was ordered “to be kept upon water gruel for three days,” and failing a suitable improvement in John’s morals and manners, the superintendent was empowered to minister this fare to the recalcitrant Hills until his better nature triumphed. Presumably John was what we call a “tough customer,” inasmuch as on the 10th of June the order is again enacted “to be carried into execution.” By this date one would imagine John found the taste of water gruel to have grown monotonous.

Apparently, Mr. Hills had lapsed from grace entirely, for on the 22nd March, 1821, he is again charged with behaving “extremely ill to the Master of the Workhouse,” and to reduce his pugnacious proclivities he is “to be taken before the Magistrates.” There John is committed to Quarter Sessions, and (presumably to avoid expense) is “bailed out” by the Trustees. His natural buoyancy being increased by this fact, Mr. Hills, on the 12th May following, vigorously assaults “Thomas Reynolds,” and for this offence John is clapped into the “Cage” once more, again to be fed with the bread and water of affliction. There is also a special note that this new offence is to be brought against him in the coming evil day. Evidently the iron has entered his soul, for on the 20th September “John Hills, a very violent and dangerous pauper,” is again ordered to be “suitably confined.”

Altogether our friend seems to be in a bad way.

28th March, 1822. Workhouse Contracts. Apparently the Trustees no longer do their own baking, as we find “Bread (best seconds) 1s. 1d. per gallon.” Coffins (a great fall in these melancholy receptacles) 16s. 6d. each.”

12th December. Among other recipients of parish relief was “the widow Pledge.” She remained “unredeemed” for a long period.

6th March, 1823. Alterations to the Workhouse “so as to

prevent the males from a general association with the females." This item cost £243.

1st May. Richard Hall, formerly Parish Beadle, and discharged for drunkenness, was ordered four days' "water gruel." Instead of "bringing in the sheaves" in the shape of "his earnings belonging to the parish," the unstable Mr. Hall used these funds to become "intoxicated." Hence the above prescription by the Trustees for his cure.

4th March, 1824. Once more it is determined to prosecute "all persons being vagrants who resort to lodging-houses, and stay thereat more than one night."

16th December. "Henry Leppard (a former Beadle) now in the House," was reduced to "a bason of soup or gruel for his dinner on Sundays and Thursdays, . . . particularly he be not allowed to partake of the dinner . . . provided on Christmas Day . . on account of his ill-treatment of Thomas Reynolds." Evidently Mr. Leppard's Christmas was of a rather melancholy character. It will be remembered that "for assaulting *Thomas Reynolds*" John Hills was placed in the "Cage." It is highly probable that Mr. Reynolds may not have been a very amiable type of person.

6th January, 1825. Paupers to sweep and clean the pavements.

18th May. Mary Harvey purloined and pawned sundry blankets and wearing apparel "belonging to the parish." Twenty-four hours in the "Cage" with water gruel was the result. On her release, Mary "absented herself without leave." Water gruel again,—for a week.

6th July, 1826. The "Cage or Prison" is to be put in repair, and the master of the House shall not in future receive in that pleasant abode any "thieves, deserters, or other persons . . . other than such as are apprehended in the parish, or requested therein to be confined by the Magistrates."

7th June, 1827. The Trustees consider "the propriety of farming the poor." The paupers were to be contracted for at so much per head per week. Particulars of this matter were advertised in the *Maidstone Gazette*. Presumably the most satisfactory tender "for the benefit of the parish" was that of "Mr. Thomas Aldis, of Stratford, Essex." Our Trustees decide to

enquire concerning "the character and principles of Mr. Aldis" before accepting. It is to be imagined that Mr. Aldis failed to rise to the level of the requirements, for the subject was dropped, and matters proceeded on the old lines. About this period, too, the Trustees were having "good times," financial aid of a substantial character having come in from Watts' Charity, particulars of which will be found in the Chapter dealing with the Parochial Charities.

6th December, 1827. Our old friend, "the widow Pledge," is awarded five yards of flannel.

15th May, 1828. "No pauper to be admitted to the House, except in case of emergency." Sanguine Caleb Perfect!

21st July. Paupers who have "worked all the week" allowed "to go out on Sundays, morning and afternoon, after attending Church, till 7 in the evening. The others are to be sedulously "kept in."

1st January, 1829. Mr. Charles Mumford tenders and was accepted to "farm the poor for three years, at 3s. 11d. per head, per week." This price hardly admitted of luxuries. Mr. Mumford died twelve months after, and his widow was released from the contract. It was also found that Mrs. Mumford could not "control the House." She was pensioned off at 8s. per week, and "Matthew Watson, and Catherine his wife," were, on the 25th August, 1830, chosen as the new Master and Mistress. Salary (united) £28 per annum. Much solemnity is observed in this appointment. Matthew has "to conduct the affairs of the Workhouse," and keep "in due subjection the poor therein." Thinking, possibly, that the aforementioned word is too autocratic, that objectional noun had the pen run through it, and "subordination" written in its place. Like the blessed word Mesopotamia, we may suppose that *subordination* brought comfort and healing in its rolling syllables. Matthew looks like having his hands full. He is to help the Overseers when required; assist in collecting the parochial rates, to help remove the paupers, with sundry other duties added; the final one of which states that Mr. and Mrs. Watson are "to make themselves frequently useful to the Trustees in all parochial affairs when he, or she, shall be required." When they are to help themselves—Heaven alone knows!

27th October, 1831. The Reverend Henry Heathcott was

required to pay "for the maintenance of his illegitimate child, by Hannah Forrest."

5th January, 1832. Candles drop 1s. per dozen pounds, consequent on that amount of duty being "taken off."

29th March. Mr. Cobb authorised to arrange for the passage of "Joseph Carter and family" to North America. A number of old Strood residents were thus assisted to that land of promise. In another direction "Mr. George Goldstone" was given £1, and £12 were "lent" to him towards taking "a house in Maidstone." Rather curious reading?

Soon after this the New Poor Law was passed and North Aylesford Union came into existence. Pending the erection of their present buildings, the Guardians hired our old Workhouse at a rental of £30.

It may be noted that the next poor rate dropped to 1s. in the pound.

Our old Workhouse, of which no known sketch is in existence, formerly stood in the North East (valley) portion of the Churchyard. It was a plain unpretentious building with a "hipped" roof in which were four dormer windows. It was taken down by order of the Trustees in May or June, 1853, by Mr. John West. The site and the garden attached were then utilised to meet an urgent parochial necessity, viz.: extended accommodation for the burial of the dead.

A facsimile of the stone which stood over its entrance door, appears at the head of the preceding chapter. The stone itself is built into the Churchyard wall, between the Railway Arch and the Committee Room, and faces east. The Parish probably owes its preservation to the efforts of the late Mr. Humphrey Wickham.



## CHAPTER XXV.

### PAROCHIAL GOVERNMENT.

*From the Journals of the Trustees.*

"'Twas very quaint, 'twas very strange,  
Extremely strange, you must allow.  
Dear me! how modes and customs change,  
It could not happen now."—*Langbridge.*

FROM the passing of the Strood Local Act of 1812, a complete record of the business of the Trustees has been kept. The first of these is a ponderous leather-bound tome, furnished with massive brass clasps. Its outer cover bears the following title—

*Strood Minute Book, 1812.*

Its records are magnificently written and well kept, and they set forth the doings of the Trustees from the first hour of meeting down to 6th December, 1827. It forms also a barometer of the parochial pulse for those memorable 15 years, and marks the travail of soul which Strood underwent during those days of unleavened bread. The first meeting was held on the 9th April, 1812, and the members of the Board then present are named in the chapter dealing with the New Church. The Chairman (Rev. James Lynn) first took the oath, and then administered it to the members. The oath, which is still used in its entirety, is as follows—

"I (A. B.) do hereby swear that I will truly and impartially, according to the best of my skill and knowledge, execute and perform all and every the Trusts, Powers, and Authorities vested in me as a Trustee, in pursuance of an Act made in the 52nd year of his late Majesty King George III., intituled 'An Act for Enlarging the Present, or Providing a New Workhouse for the use of the Parish of Strood, in the County of Kent; for Better Governing, Maintaining, and Employing the Poor of the said Parish; and also for Repairing or Rebuilding the Church and Tower of the said Parish, and for other purposes relating thereto,' and that without malice, prejudice, favour, or affection, So help me, God."

Mr. James Stott was appointed Clerk to the Trustees, his

first year's work being purely honorary. Mr. Stott was an ideal man for the situation! His writing, covering 151 folio pages, is beautifully clear, almost equal to copper-plate in its faultless execution, and there is not one deleted word in all the pages he thus entered.

The chief business done at this opening meeting was in relation to the Church; a Poor Rate of 2s. in the £ was made, and the parents of William Dicks, John Whetstone, and George Tanner were bidden to bring these errant youths before the Trustees at their next meeting, the said youths having frequently "broken the Church windows, thrown stones at the Church clock, and committed other depredations." Two new rooms were ordered to be added to the Workhouse, with a cellar under them.

30th April, 1812. Resolved "That only one Trustee be permitted to speak at one time; that each gentleman when delivering his sentiments, or speaking 'to order,' should rise and make his address whilst standing, to the Chairman."

As it was ordered that this resolution was to be "strictly attended to and enforced," it may be accepted as indicative of past stormy discussions. Never having been repealed, this sensible provision is yet in force. Mr. Hulkes was made Treasurer, under bond for £500.

4th May. Henry Herbert Payne was this day appointed as Collector of the Poor and Church Rate; salary, £20 per annum. Bonds: himself, £200, and two securities at £100 each.

Mr. Payne was not a success. On the 14th October following he was charged as having "grossly neglected to execute his office with credit to himself:" and his trust was taken from him. He appears again on the 3rd December, but his "accounts were not properly drawn," and he was ordered to appear again at the next meeting with an improved financial statement. Finally, on the 7th January, the luckless sureties of Mr. Payne were called upon to pay for his defalcations. Rather a Payne-ful affair.

17th April, 1812. Notice from the "Chatham Sub-division" for four men to be immediately provided for the Militia. Two men "as substitutes" had been "provided," at a cost of two and a half guineas each, by Mr. John Scoones, the Overseer. This gentleman is desired to "provide the remaining two upon the same terms."



*From a Photo]*

*[By J. H. Weekes.*

STROOD TRUSTEES, 1898.

Wm. J. Wenborn.	Robt. Powell.	Chas. D. Levy.
Geo. West.		T. M. Masters.
Rei Fry.	Hy. Smetham.	Dr. A. T. V. Packman.
Wm. H. Dakers	Wm. Edmonds.	J. Elvy.
(Collector).		Geo. Paine.
Geo. E. Evenden.	Wm. Collard.	Hy. Dibley.



From a Photo]

[By J. H. Weekes.

STROOD TRUSTEES, 1898.

	Robert Miskin.	Chas. G. Link.
Thos. Clibbon.	Win. B. Samson.	A. Charrison.
Chas. S. Roberts.	Geo. Robinson	Hy. Tranah.
	(Clerk).	Chas. A. Woollett.
Owen Ball	Win. C. Barker.	Thos. Skinner.
John G. Jeffery	Fd. Turner.	
(Assistant Overseer).		



30th April. Mr. John Gibbs was instructed to "lay before the Trustees his bill upon the parish," for the expenses incurred in passing the Act of Parliament. No statement of such total is given, but Mr. Gibbs receives several sums of £200 at a time in discharge of this item.

13th June, 1812. Messrs. Hone and Scoones, Overseers, are this day judged by the Trustees as being "guilty of the most gross neglect in their duty to the parish." There is good reason to believe that Strood suffered much misuse of parochial funds in those days.\*

14th October, 1812. Order for the payment of £50 19s. 6d., "amount of the County Stock payable by this parish."†

In the Vestry-book, and continued in the Trustees' records, we have evidence that many parishioners appealed against their assessments, notably a certain Miss Friday. Apparently, the heart of Pharoah was not more hardened against the Children of Israel than were the Trustees, judging by their reiterated refusals against abatements, particularly to the petitions of this lady. She is again refused on 10th December, 1812.

17th December. After notice read out in Frindsbury Church, three new Trustees were appointed in places vacated.‡

\* "The Overseers were taken from the shopkeeping or farmer class, and served not even for a year, but for six, three, or even two months. The office was disagreeable, unpopular, unpaid, and specially obnoxious to busy men. There were no books kept by which the cost of relief, or the reasons of giving it could be examined. . . . Against partiality, favouritism, and jobbing there was no check; against embezzlement very little. If the Overseers refused relief the pauper could summon them before the Magistrates, whose order they must obey; but a more dreaded tribunal at the beershop, with a stringent procedure in the way of arson and violence was at hand to compel obedience. . . . Their duties were delegated to wives, children, and shopmen."—T. W. Fowle: *The Poor Law*, pp. 76-77.

† COUNTY FUND.—Up to the suppression of the Monasteries the poor were kept by private benevolence; after that various enactments were made regulating the support of the poor. By the 43 Elizabeth, c. 2, Overseers were appointed in every Parish to provide funds for the relief of old, blind, &c., not able to work—the poor's house: and to provide work for such as are able but cannot obtain work—the workhouse. There were various amendments to this law. The townships A and B were assessed for County Rates, although each maintained its own poor. This was equalised by 12 George III., c. 29, whereby Justices at Quarter Sessions may make one general rate, to answer all former rates, which shall be deemed the Public Stock, and to be laid out in Repairing of Bridges, Gaols, or Houses of Correction. This was further amended by 52 George III., c. 110, and again by 55 George III., c. 51, and 56 George III., c. 49.

‡ To be a Trustee is a life appointment. Failure to attend meetings for six months, insolvency, or to reside out of the Parish, renders the appointment void.



30th April, 1813. Trustees contribute £5 towards "making the walk . . . leading from the bottom of the Green to Frindsbury Church." We can only wish the sum had been doubled.

1st July. The Trustees order a certain "Statement of Facts" to be inserted in the Maidstone and Canterbury papers, "as an Address . . . to the Inhabitants of Kent."\*

23rd September. At last! Miss Friday allowed an abatement of 14s. on the assessment of her "butcher's shop"—it was untenanted.

29th October. £18 15s. od. paid the "County Treasurer on account of Noah Voice, a substitute" in the Militia.

6th December. £21 Reward offered by the Trustees "for apprehending one or both the persons who robbed Jacob Simmons, a journeyman blacksmith, of Strood, travelling from Meopham to Strood, on Tuesday evening last, about seven o'clock, in a place called Long Bottom, near the Race Fields,† in the Parish of Strood, of 14 £1 notes, . . . when one of the men fired a shot gun at the said Jacob Simmons and wounded him in the hand, which rendered amputation immediately necessary." No evidence is given that these desperate miscreants were ever arrested.

10th October, 1816. "Non-parish" persons taking water from Strood pump are ordered to pay up their arrears.

8th January, 1817. John Sedgewick,‡ "Borsholder," to be paid his salary.

\* Search in the papers of this date from the places named has failed to reveal this "address."

† This is the open space, bounded by woodland South, West, and North, at the entrance from Strood to the Cobham Woods. In the Strood *Tithe Map* the Race Fields are stated to contain 24 acres.

‡ An ancient institution of the Anglo-Saxons, among whom it signified one of the lowest Magistrates, whose authority extended over one tithing, freeburgh, or decennary, consisting of ten families. Every freeman wishing to enjoy the protection of the laws, and not to be treated as a vagabond, was under the necessity of being admitted of the tithing where he dwelt. As each member of this community was held surety for the good behaviour of his fellows, they were very cautious not to admit bad characters. With its "Borsholder" at its head, these little communities determined all petty matters of the tithing, and put their sentences into execution. Failing agreement, the matter in dispute went before the "Court of the Hundred."—Burrows: *Dictionary of Art, Science, and Literature*, Vol. II., p. 501.

"Whereas it appears to this Court (of Maidstone) that by the petition of Thomas Payne, that he has served in the office of Borsholder, in Temple Borough, in Strood, for the space of a year last past; and that he now

23rd October. It was resolved to keep locked the handle of the Parish pump from "ten in the morning until five in the afternoon" on Sundays. "The Beadle, with other assistants if requisite," were "appointed to carry this resolution into effect." Evidently opposition was expected.

27th November. Here is a mysterious matter. Resolved—"That a letter be addressed to Mr. Charles Mumford requesting him to desist from permitting and encouraging the *immoral* practices of children under his instruction performing mock plays in his warehouse, and on those occasions receiving money; and in case he neglects or refuses to comply with this order, he be prosecuted." "Angels and Ministers of Grace defend us!" Here's a Puritanical hullabaloo about (we may imagine) the performance of a childish set piece, in which, with the greatest propriety—as far as *morality* is concerned—the twelve Apostles, with perfect innocence, might have engaged themselves actors!

Two paupers "of sufficient strength and confidence" are again deputed to carry out, in alliance with the Beadle, the order about locking up the pump handle on Sundays during, as the policeman would put it, "prohibited hours." In the event of these gallant paupers carrying out their duties "with care and attention," they are to be awarded 1s. each. Imagine, dear reader, we beseech thee, the spectacle here presented.

3rd September, 1818. Trustees purchased at auction sale a plot of land, "containing about two acres, . . . called Pond Field, . . . adjoining Brompton Lane and Gun Lane."

When the New Poor Law came into force, the Trustees sold this land, which had meanwhile done duty as the Workhouse garden, to the North Aylesford Guardians, for £500. Interesting results ensue. After obtaining the signed deed of conveyance, the Guardians, apparently impressed with the truth of the old proverb that "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush," desire to retain the cash as a set-off for the contributory quota

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desires to be discharged of the said Borsholdership in regard there is no Court Leet kept there, whereby he might be discharged of his said office; it is therefore ordered by this Court that the said Thomas Payne be discharged of his said office of Borsholder, and that William Backinsall be Borsholder in Temple Borough aforesaid, for a year next and ending, and that he take his oath of Borsholder according to law.—Maydstone, Mich., 1669. *Kentish Note Book*, Vol. I., p. 128.

The parish of Wateringbury possesses one of these ancient staffs of office.—*Kentish Note Book*, Vol. I., p. 114.

Strood was jointly called upon to furnish towards the total expense involved in establishing the New Union. Strood was heavily in debt. There is no evidence of its poor law borrowings from the Church Fund being all repaid. A substantial sum was also owing to Mr. Martin Bulmer. The chagrin of our worthy Justiciars may therefore be imagined at this flank movement of the Guardians. There are threats to "determine what steps shall be taken," and Mr. Wickham lays a statement of the case before the Poor Law Commissioners; but the Guardians score, they keep the cash, and the land also.

Mr. Samuel West had for some years been the Clerk to the Trustees. A very excellent penman, and methodical, careful man was Samuel. His salary, well-earned, was £10 per annum. Mr. West resigned his appointment, having removed to Rochester, 5th February, 1824. His entries cover 436 pages of folio MSS. In all this mass of writing there is not to be found one illegible or deleted word!

The Parish Accounts often got into a bemuddled condition; when this occurred, it was an event of fair frequency, the cry of the Trustees, like that of Saul, was "Bring me up Samuel." There is no question but Mr. West did yeoman service for Strood in his days.

25th March, 1819. Mr. J. F. Freeland was chosen "Stipendiary Overseer." Salary, £40 per year. Like Mr. West, Mr. Freeland had done much gratuitous work for the Parish.

#### TRAITORS IN THE CAMP!

22nd April. "It having been found by experience that some of the present Trustees have through *ignorance* and from improper motives made it a practice to misrepresent the proceedings of their meetings in order to bring the majority of the Trustees into disrepute with the lower order and uninformed part of the inhabitants of the Parish,"

Resolved and ordered—"That when it shall be found that any Trustee shall have represented the proceedings of the Trustees as detrimental to the general benefit and better order and management of the parochial concerns, that a vote of censure shall be passed against such Trustee by a majority of a meeting, and the name of such Trustee (whilst such vote of censure shall stand upon record) shall be placarded and affixed upon some conspicuous part of the walls of the committee room."

And it was solemnly "Ordered, that the above be entered as a Standing Resolution, with the minutes of the Trustees."

Thus, therefore, did these unworthy cavillers and detractors find their names and offences exhibited, and like Belshazzar of old, it was thus recorded on the wall that they had been "weighed in the balances and found wanting."

10th February, 1820. Three medical men tender for the post of "Parish Doctor;" all name the same figure for remuneration. Mr. Charles Bathurst is chosen.

5th September, 1822. Ordered that the Churchwardens "pay for sparrows and vermin as heretofore."

22nd August, 1823. Pump to be guarded once more, and offenders lodged in the "Cage."

6th May. Mr. Freeman, "miller, of Frindsbury," charged 21s. per year for one barrel of water per week.

13th September, 1826. Mr. Stevenson, Lord Darnley's steward, the Surveyor of Cobham, and ours of Strood, agree to place boundary stones at "Bread and Cheese" Hill.\*

4th August, 1825. Trustees agree to raise £100 towards the cost of the "intended turnpike road to Malling." Formerly the way to Cuxton lay along a narrow, ill-kept, rough sort of bridle path, just wide enough for a waggon to get along, but decidedly difficult for two such vehicles to pass, save in certain spots. At the crest of the Sundridge Hill, on the Cuxton side of the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway arch, a portion of this old road yet remains. It is on the West bank, and overgrown with shrubs and small timber.

18th January, 1827. Mr. William Watt to pay 12s. per month (1st of March raised to 21s.) "for water taken by him from the Parish pump, under his contract with the Thames and Medway Canal." Undoubtedly this was for human or machine consumption. The mind stands aghast at Mr. Watt attempting to fill the Canal by the aid of Strood pump! wonderful as its ancient powers were. What follows is the probable solution of the question.

The writer in *Virtue's Guide* (see p. 202) notes that the

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\* The rising ground on the Cobham Road, near to "Spring Pond" and the "Crutches" Inn.

excavators of the Thames and Medway Canal were troubled by "land springs." Unfortunately, the trouble was not confined to them solely. Certain residents at Frindsbury, whose wells those springs had previously supplied, were also very much "troubled" when on going to their usual founts of supply, they found during the progress of the works that their water had vanished never to reappear. The difficulty was met by the Canal Company contracting to supply these water-bereaved persons from that unfailing fount—Strood Pump. This glorious heritage of ours—whose waters, in the opinions of many old inhabitants, outweigh the virtues of Jordan—had a supply which was perennial, a volume that was abundant, and qualities unusually tasty and beneficent. Not only had our old pump ministered to Strood for ages past, and nourished and sustained our "wholesome neighbours" at Frindsbury, but,—as witness our old Vestry-book, 30th June, 1805—was also frequently called into requisition to supply the needs of our predominant partner, Rochester. On that day, as is fully set forth in our local chronicles, a Vestry of the inhabitants of Strood levy the modest toll of 10s. 6d. per annum upon those inhabitants of the ancient city whose supply of that indispensable element was taken from our old Parish pump.

Touching the antiquity of this erection no evidence has appeared by which it can be determined, but doubtless a pump has stood on the same site for ages. The original Strood Trustees, and their fathers before them, ever guarded and regarded this "heir of the ages" with the tenderest interest, and exacted tribute for its uses from all parochial "outlanders" with a zeal worthy a Roman Cæsar, as witness the following:—

18th April, 1816. Resolved, "that all persons taking and carrying away water from the Parish pump at Strood, being non-parishioners, do pay after the rate of 30s. annually if holders of an Inn. [Trustees evidently were not favourable to the dilution of the National beverage.] And that every private individual so fetching and taking away water, being a non-parishioner, do pay 7s. per year, and that such persons have notice accordingly."

23rd April, 1829. Rev. Mr. Formby ordered to be summoned for 7s. for water taken from the Parish pump by agreement.

30th April, 1828. Mr. John Nash sworn in as Overseer.



Mr. Nash has the reputation of being no lover of Mr. John Gibbs; the fact is well borne out by the following:—

6th November, 1828. "Mr. John Nash, one of the Overseers, having used violent and ungentlemanly conduct towards Mr. Gibbs, by calling him a *liar*—it was moved by Mr. Thomas Spencer Woollett, and seconded by Mr. Edward Buck, and unanimously agreed to by the Trustees present, that a vote of censure for such conduct be passed against Mr. Nash, and be placarded in the Committee Room, pursuant to the order and resolution of the Trustees made on the 22nd April, 1819."

Fifty copies of the above were ordered to "be printed, sent to the Trustees, and otherwise exhibited."

Mr. John Gibbs was Mayor of Rochester in 1829. It is reported that Nash—who opposed everything Gibbs said, did, or proposed, no matter whether good, bad, or indifferent—once more called Gibbs a liar, as the latter sat in his Mayoral seat. What followed this awful circumstance we are unable to chronicle, and imagination pales at the attempt to convey it. Mr. Nash lived in Fordington House, next to Messrs. Biggs' brewery.

1st March, 1832. Trustees advertise for a "Street Policeman." Robert Wells was appointed at a salary of 10s. per week, sundry garments and a policeman's staff\* being furnished by the Trustees, the members of which august body Robert is instructed to hold in reverent awe.

25th June, 1832. Mr. Humphrey Wickham appointed Clerk to the Trustees.

29th March, 1835. Last exercise of pauper governance by the Trustees. The next Poor Rate dropped to 1s. in the £.

12th April, 1838. A Committee of the Trustees report that they have inspected the "Charity land at Upnor, Hoo, and Frindsbury, . . . and found thereon a considerable number of small timber trees."† They also found "that encroachments

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\* Mr. John Wood has presented the writer with (presumably) this identical rod of office and defence. The initials "R. W." are painted upon it in yellow, side by side, a crown being depicted above. In smaller capitals are the letters "I. V.," with a Maltese cross between. The staff is of oak, and has a long leaden pellet let in the top, to add weight and unction to its persuasive powers. The body of the staff is painted black, with a pyramidal border top and bottom. It is considerably "moth eaten," and like Horatius appears "spent with changing blows."

† The Dean [of Durham] shall not sell or give away any wood fit for timber.—Hutchinson: *History of Durham*, Vol. II., p. 121.

Timber had to be planted in fulfilment of covenants. "The said

had been made by John Raysdown and another." A new lease of the whole land to be granted to George Baker, Esq. "A correct plan of the lands to be drawn upon the said lease and counterpart." The Trustees own a map of this property.

14th March, 1839. Trustees object to the pauper dead from the North Aylesford Union being buried in the Churchyard. The population of the Parish is this day given as 2,900, and the difficulty of disposing of the dead had become chronic. Considering our old Churchyard had done duty for over 600 years, this objection can be well understood.

30th July, 1840. "The Tradesmen's United Gas Light and Coke Company of Rochester, Chatham, and Strood" made application this day for a "99 years' lease of the Old Workhouse and premises."†

9th August, 1843. £20 paid Mr. Catlin "for a Map and Book of Reference of the Parish." This map, very valuable for its references, is still in the possession of the Parish.

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Thomas Richardson . . . . shall and will . . . . soe often as need be all during the said terme, well and sufficiently maintaine, repaire, amende, uphold, fence, and hedge with quicksett, and from time to time fill upp the bare places with quicksett where it shall faile or be wanting, and likewise ditch, cleanse, secure and keep upp the demised p'misses, and every p'te and p'cell thereof, with all needful and necessary reparac'ons . . . . And shall yearly dureing the said terme plante, or sett, or cause to be planted or sett upon some p'te of the demised p'misses, fower seasonable plantes of oake, ashe, or elme, apt and fitt to growe and be timber, and them p'serve and keep from hurte and spoyle of cattle or otherwise; and also from lopping or topping of them, or any of them." Lease in Ovingham, 5th June, 1665.—*Notes and Queries*, 8th S., Vol. II., p. 310.

The Statute of 35 Henry VIII., 1543, enacted that in all clearings certain trees should be left.—*Ibid*, p. 375.

According to Knight's *English Encyclopædia*, oak, ash, and elm, of the age of 20 years and upwards, are the trees most generally included as "timber trees," but there are many other kinds, such as beech, cherry, aspen, willow, thorn, holly, horse chestnut, lime, yew, walnut, &c., which by the custom of England are considered as "timber trees," being those used in building.

Statute 45 Edward III., cap. 3, freed "Great Wood" from payment of tithe, *e.g.*—Item: "At the complaint of the said great men and commons, showing by their petition that whereas they sell their great wood of the age of xx yeres or of greater age to marcha'ts to their owne profit, or in ayde of the Kyng in his warres, persones and Vicars of Holie Church do impleade and drawe the said marchaunts in the Spirituall Court for the tithes of the said wood, in the name of this word called *Silva Sedua*, whereby they cannot sell their woodes to verie valour, to the great damage to them and the Realme. It is ordayned and stablished that a prohibition in thys shal be granted, and upon ye same an attachement as it hath been before this time."—*Rastall's Statutes*, 1579.

† This undertaking was started in opposition to the present Company. It died in its infancy, whilst its rival yet flourishes like a green bay tree.

The letting of pews was not an unmixed blessing, and formerly gave the Trustees much trouble.

23rd September, 1844. A Mr. Coombes is informed "that if he does not forthwith relinquish pew No. 27, . . . the Trustees will fix a lock on the door of the said pew." What occurred is not stated.

"SOMETHING GONE WRONG WITH THE WORKS."

7th April, 1846.—Here we come upon an announcement calculated to take away one's breath. It concerns the mysterious disappearance of the works of our parish clock, as thus:—"Ordered, that the clerk do to-morrow write to Mr. Steadman and request him to restore the works of the parish clock immediately."

14th April.—The clerk reported that Mr. Steadman had not answered his letter; whereupon Messrs. West and Bass were appointed to wait upon Mr. Steadman "and endeavour to induce him to restore the works of the parish clock."

21st April.—The two emissaries above named were unable to see Mr. Steadman, that gentleman being ill; but they reported that the worthy but unfortunate clocksmith\* had handed the missing vitals to his workman "named Sedgewick." Mr Wickham was desired to interrogate the last named horological authority with an idea of solving the mystery. Nothing, however, came of this interview, presuming it took place, of which event no record is given; but on the 5th May, Mr. Steadman is informed that the Trustees will pay him "two guineas for replacing and repairing them" (the works), providing this event takes place "within a week."

The explanation of this incident has been given me as follows—The Churchwardens of that day gave Mr. Huggett, a decorative parishioner, the order to paint the dial of the clock and to gold gild its figures and hands. The work was done—satisfactorily and capably. As in the opinion of the Trustees, this order of the Churchwardens trespassed upon their powers and prerogatives over the fabric, they repudiated the whole matter, refused to pay for it, and gave *their* order to a Mr. Betts, who formerly carried on business in the establishment

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\* Mr. Steadman was a millwright.

now owned by Mr. A. B. Acworth, to paint the dial again! *In the interregnum* the works were stolen! Truly as pretty a piece of sheer humbuggery as ever brought loss and ridicule upon a parish.

But no cajoleries nor threats produced the missing movements. And on the 29th May the Trustees, as a last effort, offered £10 reward for the missing interior of our parochial timepiece. Alas! it was "no go," no tidings of the "person or persons by whom the said works were clandestinely removed" being forthcoming, though "handbills advertising the above reward" were freely distributed.

In utter despair, on the 7th July, Mr. Wickham is instructed to "prepare a case for the opinion of counsel as to what steps should be taken to recover the missing works of the parish clock, or compensation for the loss of them."

Every patriotic Stroodite will lament to learn, that at the time of tribulations with the clock, the parish pump—good and faithful servant that it was! had also broken down—not quite so bad as it is now—and Mr. Chas. Newlyn was to be employed to put the same in repair, or "if necessary to put down a new pump."

The next meeting brings us to the entry spoken of by Stalchsmidt, for it is here set down 11th August, 1846, as follows:—

Resolved, "That so many of the bells which are cracked as shall be necessary to enable the Trustees to pay for a new clock and the fixing thereof in the tower shall be sold."

Resolved, "That Mr. Deacon, Mr. West, Mr. Gibbs, Mr. Buck, Mr. Betts, Mr. Perkis, Mr. Bulmer, Mr. Rayson, and Mr. J. S. Cobb, be, and they are hereby constituted, a committee, for the purpose of selling the said bells, and with the proceeds of such sale, with the sanction of the Trustees, of purchasing a turret clock and having the same fixed in the tower of the church."

7th October—"The committee on education for Strood, Frindsbury and Higham" applied for "a grant of a piece of the present workhouse yard whereon to erect a school house." It was resolved "that the clerk do write to the said committee, and say that the Trustees would feel much pleasure in offering every



proper facility for the erection of the proposed schools, but that under the 40th section of the Local Act . . . they consider themselves prohibited from letting or selling the plot of land in question otherwise than 'by public auction for the best price that can be got for the same.'"

10th November, 1846—Whether Mr. Wickham "prepared a case for counsel's" opinion as was determined by our irate Trustees on the 7th July last, or not, respecting the missing vitals of our old church clock, does not appear, but apparently the clocksmith scored, inasmuch as on this date the following significant entry occurs, viz. :—

"Ordered, that the sum of ten guineas demanded by Mr. Steadman, be paid at the first opportunity from the poor rate."

Possibly some local Mrs. Winifred Pryce on past occasions be-rated her delaying, staying-out-at-night husband, by the unswerving rectitude of our old parish time piece?

"Look at the Clock!" quoth Winifred Pryce,  
As she opened the door to her husband's knock;  
Then paused to give him a piece of advice,  
'You nasty warmint, look at the clock!'  
Is this the way, you wretch every day, you  
Treat her who vowed to love and obey you?  
Out all night? me in a fright;  
Staggering home as it's just getting light!  
You intoxicated brute; you insensible block!  
Look at the Clock, do! look at the Clock!

If it were so, Barham's witty story may shed a little light upon the motive animating the depredator.

16th May, 1850. In addition to absorbing our peal of bells, this clock swallowed up—To Mr. Lilly, for carpenter's and blacksmith's work and materials, £23 9s. 1d.; Mr. Hooper, mason's work, £1 4s. od.; Mr. Wickham, advertisements, etc., and for balance paid Messrs. Moore, £7 16s. 4d.—£32 9s. 5d. Add proceeds of sale of bells, £79 18s. 1d., and we get a total cost of £112 7s. 6d.; to which must be added "paid Mr. Steadman for losing (?) the works," £10.

19th May, 1853. "The Auditor having struck out of the last half-year's account the sum of £5 5s. od., paid by the Trustees to Mr. Daniel Purkis, for winding and repairing the Parish Clock, it was resolved that the Clerk do write to the Poor Law Board and explain that the clock in question *was purchased*



by subscription,\* and is the property of the Parish, and request that the decision of the Auditor may be reversed."

On the 10th January, 1850, the Trustees resolve to pay Messrs. Moore the balance due for the Parish Clock "out of the money received from the sale of the bells, . . . as far as that will extend, and the balance out of the Poor Rate." In the face of such a statement, this announcement about "purchased by subscription" reads like the Dutchman's ejaculation on the swallowing of the big oyster, "Very goot, indeed."

### STROOD CHURCH BELLS.

(With apologies to Edgar Allan Poe.)

Oh the bells—

Oh the swinging and the ringing of the bells.

Oh, the bells, the Strood Church bells !  
That once we had ! It's really sad, much too bad !  
How the Trustees sold our bells to buy a clock !  
Let the tale be briefly told, how in those dark days of old,  
Strood, as *usual*, went to leeward o'er the clock.

Many long years in the tower, our old clock had tolled the hour  
(Tho' it never *tol'd* the rogue who stole its works).  
But no doubt those wicked men, who 'sniped' off with its vitals  
Were as naughty and unspeakable as Turks. [then,  
The Trustees waxed exceeding cross, and they advertised their  
Yea, and offered a reward of sovereigns ten—Noble men ! [loss;  
But 'twas never run to ground—or in other words not found;—  
Oh the shock ! So at last they sold the bells to buy a clock.

Ever since our noble peal—*three* in number,—shameful deal !  
Make a very sorry, sorry ding, dong, ding, [throats—  
As they clang their jarring notes, fit to burst their brazen  
One has done it ! mark its wheezy ping, pong, ping !

Now however fair the bride—humble she, or puffed with pride,  
We can never give bell music—tho' alack ! [steeple,  
When *death* comes among the people, they proclaim it from the  
But they've never rung a joy bell since the wrack.

Now 'twas not so long ago, as we all most clearly know,  
Queen Victoria attained her Jubilee;  
Mr. Banning, worthy man, he came forward with a plan,  
One both sensible and fitting, as you'll see.

Said this worthy Vicar then, to the Trustees "Now my men"—  
(This, of course, was not *his* phraseologie)—  
"We are badly off for bells, we can only toll the knells,  
Now this offer I will freely make to ye.

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\* Possibly subscriptions may have been asked and given, but no note of the fact is recorded.

To celebrate our good Queen's reign, and to bring to Strood again  
Former glories that were her's as hist'ry tells.

If you'll give to me the power, I will place up in your tower,  
A complete and a 'splendiferous' peal of bells."

Now you'll hardly think it true, what I'm going to say to you,  
Though its true as eggs are eggs—and what a frost! [hand—  
When for this boon you understand, each Trustee had raised his  
God forgive 'em! Its recorded

"IT WAS LOST" !!!\*

1st April, 1852. Once more Mr. Samuel West earns the  
thanks of the Trustees for setting straight our parochial finance.

"Henceforth be no officer of mine." These words of  
Othello correctly describe the situation which now arose.

20th July, 1854. The Trustees desired to discharge certain  
Church officials. (Counsel had reported that the Trustees had  
no power to appoint them!) The said officials refused to be dis-  
charged! The Clerk was instructed to give these worthy persons  
"a proper notice," which, if both contentions were right, was  
putting Mr. Wickham into a rather tight place. Finally, as Mr.  
and Mrs. Hurly refused to be so dismissed, they were told by the  
Trustees that henceforth no payment will be made to them for  
the discharge of such duties.

3rd August. The Vicar, two Churchwardens, and Mr. West  
were appointed to wait upon the Home Secretary, orders having  
arrived from that department to close the Churchyard. It was  
the mission of these gentlemen to point out to "the Home  
Secretary . . . the position of the Parish, its means of  
providing an enlarged cemetery at a small expense," and to point

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\* 10th March, 1887. "On the proposition being put to the meeting  
that the Trustees give their consent to the placing of extra bells in the  
tower of the Church, and a show of hands being called for, the proposition  
was declared lost."

At this meeting, when Mr. Banning made his proposal for the Jubilee  
Peal of Bells, some misgiving existed among the Trustees as to the  
stability of the tower being equal to the strain the Bells would put  
upon it. The question was raised as to who was responsible if the tower  
collapsed. It was replied that "the Trustees were responsible." Acting  
under this belief the members, as a matter of self-protection, voted against  
the proposition, with the result as above recorded. The preceding matter  
had been written and published before this explanation of the Trustees'  
vote came to the writer's knowledge, and he thinks it but fair to offer this  
explanation. Had he himself accepted the same view, he should have  
voted as they did. The assertion that the Trustees were responsible  
is entirely erroneous. No such liability rests upon that body. It is worth  
noting that the walls of the tower are 4ft. 6in. thick, and though some of  
the inner portion is of chalk, it is well and firmly built, and solid in all  
parts.

out our dolorous state with "all the heavy incumbrances already pressing on the Parish, with a view to induce a relaxation of the contemplated order to close the present churchyard." This was eventually arranged.

21st June, 1855. The Submarine Telegraph Company were this day assessed at £20. Their wires ran in square wood boxes under the South-western edge of the paths, along the London Road, and through the High Street. It was not a financial success.

30th October. Workhouse yard and premises conveyed by the Trustees to the New Burial Board (Mr. F. Wheeler the only dissident), for a new cemetery. This refers to the North (valley) portions of the Churchyard.

27th April, 1857. Mr. Samuel West again called in to set our financial matters straight, Mr. William Thomas Clark, the Collector, having gone somewhat astray. Mr. West for his services is again publicly thanked, and the unhappy bondsmen of Mr. William Thomas Clark have to pay £25 13s. 8d. out of pocket, such being described as his "defalcations" to the parish.

19th June, 1884. Memorial from the Trustees to the Corporation requesting that body to purchase the Recreation Ground.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### ST. MARY'S CHURCH.

If Gideon's fleece, which drench'd with dew be found,  
While moisture none refresh'd the herbs around,  
Might fitly represent the Church, endow'd  
With heavenly gifts to heathens not allow'd ;  
In pledge, perhaps, of favours from on high,  
Thy locks were wet when others' locks were dry.  
Heaven grant us half the omen—may we see  
Not drought on others, but much dew on thee!

William Cowper: *Miscellaneous Poems*.

"God never wrought miracles to convince Atheism, because  
His ordinary works convince it."—Bacon: *Essay 16*.

THE first stone of this very beautiful Church was laid on the 22nd July, 1868; the ecclesiastical Parish of St. Mary being constituted on the 7th August, 1869, at Osborne House, Isle of Wight. It was gazetted on the 10th. It was formed out of the parochial Chapelry of Strood, and out of the Parish of Frindsbury. The Reverend John Griffith, Canon of Rochester, paid into the Bank of England £3,000 in aid of the endowment, out of which £100 per year was paid to the Incumbent in two half-yearly instalments, to which the Ecclesiastical Commissioners added £50 per annum.\* The first nomination to be made by the said Canon Griffith, and the subsequent patronage and nominations to be vested in the Bishop of Rochester. On the completion of the Church, the benefice was offered by the Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Griffiths to the Rev. J. H. Drew, M.A., of Exeter College, Oxford, who accepted it, and is the present Vicar.

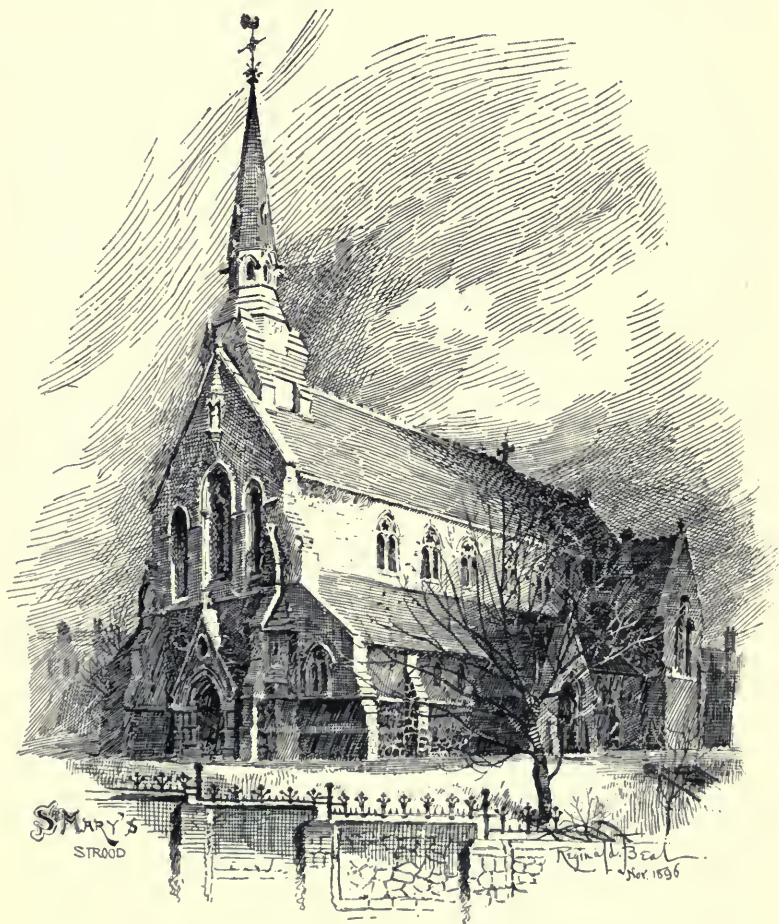
The boundary of the Parish of St. Mary begins in the middle of the river Medway, running West, down the centre of Rochester Bridge, and goes up the middle of the High Street to the "Angel," including all its Northern side. It then continues up the centre of North Street to Stonehorse Lane, along the centre of which

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\* 12th November, 1869. To this sum of £50 was added the proviso that should at any time lands, tenements or hereditaments sufficient to produce this sum fall into their hands, they would be annexed to the district in lieu of the liability of the Commissioners.—*Ecclesiastical Reports for England*, 1870, Vol. 23, p. 16.



Lane it extends for "28 chains or thereabouts to the boundary which divides" Strood from Frindsbury. From this spot it runs S.E. and S.W. to where Frindsbury is "joined by the New Road leading from the Strood S.E.R. Station" to the Canal Road, and



ST. MARY'S CHURCH.

*Drawn by R. J. Beale.*

continues across it down the centre of Strood pier to the middle of the river.\*

16th May, 1871. The endowment was ordered to be increased when the Reverend John Formby should cease to be Incumbent

\* *Ibid*, pp. 663-6.



of Frindsbury, with a portion of the tithe forming part of the endowment of Frindsbury.

19th May, 1871. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners paid £600, being a benefaction to them, towards providing a parsonage, the interest of any balance to be paid to the Incumbent.\*

18th June, 1874. Commissioners ordered their grant of £300 to be reduced to £150 immediately on the avoidance of the Vicarage of Frindsbury by the Rev. J. Formby.

14th January, 1875. Extraordinary rent charge in lieu of hops, fruit, etc., demised by the Reverend J. W. Sheringham, by deed dated 29th June, 1849, was granted to the Incumbent, also a further sum of £1 4s. payable by the Incumbent of Strood to the Dean and Chapter was given to the Incumbent of St. Mary's.†

The Church was opened and consecrated by the late Bishop Claughton, on Tuesday morning, 16th November, 1869. The Bishop took the following for his text on the occasion:—"For the poor shall never cease out of the land; therefore I command thee saying, thou shalt open thine hand unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy in thy land."—*Deut.* xv. v. 11. After the service a dinner took place in Strood Schools, at which Canon Griffiths mentioned that the Church and its endowment were chiefly effected through the personal savings of his wife.

On the North pillar of the Chancel arch is a well-executed brass plate, bearing the following inscription:—"Sacred to the memory of Mary Elizabeth Griffiths, Founder of this Church. Born 9th October, 1802, died 30th November, 1875."

The contract price of the Church was £6,083, Messrs. Foord being the builders. It is asserted, with every evidence of credibility, that its total cost exceeded £13,000. Its wealth of beautiful carving and other lovely decorative work, make it, beyond question, the most unique example of excelling merit in point of exquisite modern work, to be found within a radius of many miles. Its designer was Mr., now Sir Arthur W. Blomfield, who also designed the Imperial Institute. Aided by the description appended, and by the late Mr. Beale's beautiful sketches, its architectural and other merits can be appreciated.

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\* *Ibid*, Vol. 24, pp. 197, 522-7.

† *Ibid*, Vol. 28, p. 464. [Note. Though this is quoted from the authority given, no such item of income is so attested or received by the Vicar of St. Mary's.]

Length of nave, 65ft. ; do. chancel, 33ft. ; width of nave, 21ft. ; do., including aisles, 48ft. ; height from floor to roof plate,



ST. MARY'S CHURCH—INTERIOR.

*Drawn by R. J. Beale,*

32ft. 6in. ; do. ridge, 50ft. ; do. bell turret, 95ft. ; floor space (clear of walls) of Church and West porches, 71ft. 6in. long by 48ft. wide ; floor space of chancel, 32ft. by 20ft. ; North transept,

17ft. 9in. by 14ft.; South transept, 17ft. 9in. by 17ft.; extreme height of aisles, and North transept, 20ft.; do. of chancel 39ft.; do. of South transept, 28ft. Chancel raised three steps above the nave, and the altar four steps above the chancel. The general proportions of the Church are lofty; the treatment of the West end is peculiar and effective internally. A range of two-light clear story windows lights the nave, and the chancel windows are single lancets, except the East window, which is a triplet with marble shafts and moulded heads; the glass in this window, as well as that in the window of the South Chapel (presented by the contractors, Messrs. Foord, in memory of their father) is by Clayton and Bell. The reredos, in alabaster, representing our Saviour revealing himself in the breaking of bread to the disciples at Emmaus, was executed in an admirable manner by Mr. T. Bromfield, who also executed all the carving in the Church. The carving of the capitals of the columns, and a figure of the blessed Virgin in a canopied niche in the West gable, may be particularly noticed for their beauty. A figure of our Lord is carved in a vesica over the West door, and an "Agnus Dei" on the South porch. On either side of the reredos texts are engraved. In the North aisle, near the chancel arch, a beautiful window by Heaton, Butler, and Baynes, the design a figure of Faith with cross and shield, has been placed in memory of Emma Maria Drew, a sister of the Vicar, with the following inscription—"Emma Maria Drew, daughter of Captain Drew, R.N. October 14th, 1889." Over the Western entrance is an inscription. There is also a beautiful brass lectern, the gift of T. H. Day, Esq., J.P., of Frindsbury. The materials used in its construction were Kentish rag and Bath stone; internally the walls are faced, partly with hassock and coloured brick. The roofs and sittings are of pitch pine, and the chancel seats are of wainscot. The gas fittings were by Messrs. Hart and Peard. The Clerk of the Works was Mr. J. R. Edmunds. The organ, which was erected by Mr. Walker, of London, has two row of keys, CC to F, with thirteen stops and two octaves of pedals; it has one pedal stop and three composition pedals.\*

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\* *Rochester and Chatham Journal*, Saturday, 20th November, 1869.



# SCHEDULE.

Extract from the Apportionment of the Rent Charge in lieu of Tithes in the Parish of Frindsbury, in the county of Kent, confirmed by the Tithe Commissioners for England and Wales, on the 18th June, 1842, and from the altered Apportionment of the Rent Charge in lieu of Tithes, on certain lands in the said Parish, confirmed by the said Commissioners on the 2nd of August, 1855.

Landowners.	Occupiers.	Nos. referring to original Apportionment	Nos. referring to altered Apportionment	Name and Description of Land and Premises.	State of Cultivation.	Quantities in Statute Measure.	Amount of Apportionment of Rent Charge upon the several lands payable to Vicar.
Dean and Chapter of Rochester, and Rev. James Formby, their lessee	Formby, Rev. James	274	278A 279A	Canal Field Plantation Garden	Orchard & arable Plantation Garden	A. R. P. 6 1 22 0 0 15 1 0 24	£ s. d. 2 7 6
Dean and Chapter of Rochester, and Thomas Hankey, their lessee	Spong, Ambrose, Jun.	142 143 299 305 308 325	141A	Church Field Chalk-pit, Field and Waste Windmill Field Great Dock Field Two Cottages Salt Marshes Old Road	Arable Arable Arable Arable Pasture	14 1 3 0 3 31 17 2 10 53 0 31 0 0 42 61 0 28 0 0 21	

## Schedule.—Continued.

Landowners.	Occupiers.	Nos. referring to original Appor-tionm't	Nos. referring to altered Appor-tionm't	Name and Description of Land and Premises.	State of Cultivation.	Quantities in Statute Measures.			Amount of Appor-tionment of Rent Charge upon the several Lands payable to Vicar.
						A.	R.	P.	£ s. d.
Dean and Chapter of Rochester, and Thomas Hankey, their lessee	Spong, Ambrose, Jun.	326		Chalk Hole Bank .....	Pasture.....	1	1	0	
		336		House, Lawn and Shrub-bery, &c.	Garden .....	1	1	7	
		337		Grass Plot .....	.....	0	2	25	
		338		Offices, Yard & Hop Kiln	.....	1	3	9	
		339		Barn Field .....	Arable .....	13	0	21	
		340		Orchard .....	Orchard .....	1	2	16	
		341		Part of Barn Field .....	Hops .....	1	3	39	
		342		Orchard Meadow .....	Pasture.....	8	2	35	
		343		Forge Field Meadow ...	Pasture.....	3	1	24	
		344		Forge Meadow .....	Pasture.....	2	3	21	
		345		Broad Field.....	Arable .....	86	0	27	
		346		Rushy Marsh .....	Pasture.....	7	2	0	
		417		Little Long Meadow ...	Pasture.....	3	3	25	
		418		Hog Marsh .....	Pasture.....	8	1	32	
		419		Pond .....	Pond .....	0	1	1	
		489		Beacon Hill Field .....	Arable .....	10	1	4	
		490		Beacon Hill Wood .....	Wood .....	14	0	28	
		493		Wood Meadow .....	Pasture.....	1	3	36	
		575		Long Meadow .....	Pasture Meadow	17	3	34	
		728		Wood Field.....	Arable .....	34	0	23	
		729		Part of Wood Field .....	Hops .....	7	2	3	



		Two Cottages and Garden	Garden	0	1	5	376	2	23	1	44	18	6
730													
	Dean and Chapter of Rochester	Spong, Ambrose, Sen.											
600			Sandy Hill	Arable	1	3	22						
606			Barn Field	Arable	32	2	7						
607			Common Field	Arable	3	3	33						
684			Ditto	Arable	0	3	38						
687			Ditto	Arable	3	0	0						
715			Plantation		0	1	18						
716			One Acre	Arable	0	3	13						
723			Burnt House, Yards, Barns and Garden	Garden	0	1	20						
					43	3	31				4	13	6
514			Wood Field	Arable	23	1	7						
516			Great Chattenden House Offices and Garden	Garden	0	2	38						
517			Little Meadow	Pasture	0	3	16						
518			Offices, Yard & Pond		0	3	3						
519			Lime House Field	Arable	34	1	14						
520			Landway Piece	Pasture	2	0	39						
521			Great ditto	Pasture	15	2	24						
523			Fourteen Acres Field	Arable	14	2	6						
524			Shaws	Wood	5	2	23						
527			Barn Field	Arable	15	1	14						
521			Shaw Wood	Wood	2	2	37						
580			Lower Thirty Acres	Arable	25	3	28						
581			Upper ditto	Arable	25	1	4						
582			Shaw or Upper and Lower Thirty Acres	Wood	4	1	0						
584			Hop Garden Field	Arable	7	1	34						
					179	0	7				12	4	6

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### THE TURNPIKE GATE.

“In the good old days—the coaching days  
Of Chumley, Commodore,  
Of Clements, Nightingale, and Boakes,  
And many who’d gone before,  
All teamed their fours through this gate and street,  
Be it hail, or sun, or snow,  
Blithe cracked the whip, loud blew the horn,  
Let the winds blow high or low.  
‘Twas a fine old institution,  
Was the old Strood Turnpike Gate.”—*Thomas Wyles.*

“WHEREAS the High Streets and Lanes in the Parish of St. Nicholas, within the City of Rochester and Parish of Strood . . . are very ill paved and cleansed . . . not lighted and watched . . . and if power was given to pave and regulate . . . preserve, maintain . . . cleanse, light, and watch the same . . . remove all obstructions, nuisances, and annoyances therein, and to prevent the same for the future; AND to make a road through Star Lane, across the fields and grounds there, leading to Chatham Hill, it would tend greatly to the safety and advantage of the said parishes, and be of public utility.”

Thus, with some needful pruning, runs the preamble to the Act of 1768, which first brought Strood the Turnpike Gate. This gate stood, as the illustration shows, stretching from the South-west corner of the “Angel” Inn to the Workmen’s Institute, opposite. This Act of Parliament gave power to make certain rates, payable one-third by tenant and two-thirds by owner, and also for the erection of a gate at the end of New Road, Chatham, in addition to ours at Strood.

Strood Turnpike Gate was abolished when the Bridge Wardens beneficently paid off the remainder of the debt, 30th November, 1876. There was much jubilation in Strood over this event, and the writer, having taken an active part, well remembers the demonstrations then made. The members of the Strood Institute secured, as part of the spoil incident to that memorable occasion, one of the large white posts, which for many years had done duty as part of this structure. For a period it stood on the Institute premises—like Lot’s wife in the plains—in mute but

eloquent testimony of former things that had passed away. So elate were the divers persons whose pockets were daily touched by this institution, that, in the usual English way, a dinner was inaugurated at the "Angel" Inn,\* on Thursday, 30th November, 1876, to celebrate its downfall, and an ode, from which the above motto verse is taken, in the nature of a song, was composed by the late Mr. Thomas Wyles, of Stonehorse Vale, and was, by him, to the tune of the "Fine Old English Gentleman," there sung, amid demonstrations of the



STROOD GATE.

Drawn by F. A. Stewart.

From a Photo by J. Eastmead.

greatest enthusiasm.† Speeches were also delivered upon this festive occasion by Messrs. J. Hulkes, R. Prall (Town Clerk), N. E. Toomer (Mayor), A. A. Arnold, W. H. Nicholson, C. A. Cobb, and others, Mr. Alderman Woodhams being chairman.

This Act of 1768 created a body of gentlemen called Commissioners of the Pavement, who also had charge of the two gates. The custom of the Commissioners in letting the gates was to take biddings during the running out of a sand-glass.

\* At the time of going to press (July, 1899) this Inn has been demolished, and a new one is to be erected on the same site. The Inn, as it previously existed, is shown on the right of illustration (see p. 220).

† See *Chatham News*, 9th May, 1896..

The highest bidder previous to the final emptying of the vessel was the tenant for the next year. It may interest the reader to mention that Strood gate usually fetched from about £900 to £1,200 per year as rent. The gate at the Chatham end of the New Road—it stood exactly facing St. Paul's Church—fetched about £300 per year. Even this poor return became smaller and beautifully less as time went on, until finally it did not pay for the cost entailed in placing a toll-keeper in possession, and so died of sheer inanition. It must not be supposed that Strood enjoyed itself in being so much mulcted, but rather that Chatham traffic was so situated that it could escape the incubus, whilst Strood had no such happy option presented to it. In 1869 these gates were advertised to be let, and realised the following sums:—Strood Gate, 1868, £920; 1869, £915. Chatham Gate, 1868, £27; 1869, £28. The letting, or sale, was held at the "King's Head," Rochester.

Among the gate-keepers at Strood was one Robert Everett, who was so unusual an individual that a personal anecdote or two concerning the man will not be out of place. As what is narrated occurred chiefly under the writer's observation, its truth can be vouched for.

"Everett," queried, or rather demanded, a certain Strood person of this gateman one day, "have you seen my man this morning?" "How the — am I to know *your* man?" replied Everett; "Why, you have a fresh one every week!" So saying, without another word he disappeared in the toll-house door.

A person on horseback once rode through the gate, omitting, or forgetting, the toll. Everett called after him—perhaps not over politely. The rider stopped some yards up the street, about opposite Mr. Wenborn's shop, and, as Everett approached him, threw him a two-shilling piece. It fell to the ground. Everett picked the coin up and retraced his steps to the gate; counting out the change, he threw it down in the mud before him, and went inside his sanctum. "Beautiful language, soft and sweet," sings the poet. Quite the opposite to this were the verbal pronouncements of the irate and furious rider, when he rode back and dismounted to gather up his scattered and muddy treasure.

A marvellous vehicle passed the gate one summer day. It



was, indeed, fearfully and wonderfully made; rope, hoop iron, cheese-boxes, hop-poles, hazel sticks, and other such flotsam and jetsam being its chief constituent elements. How it rolled along upon its two wobbling, rickety wheels was simply marvellous; and how the poor spavined, raw-boned steed that propelled it accomplished the task was, of the two, more wonderful still. It was a blazing hot day, and Robert had forsaken the sultry heat of the toll-house, and, as was his wont on such occasions, sat under the shadow afforded by the establishment opposite. The proprietor of the chariot was a



VIEW OF HIGH STREET, STROOD.

*From a Photo by J. H. Weekes,*

tousle-headed, unwashed individual of from any age, from sixty to eighty years, accompanied by his wife. He had paid the fee demanded by the gateman just a moment before his accomplished partner came along. What ensued was highly interesting to the onlookers—among whom I count it my especial happiness to have been one. This gentle soul, with the well-known parsimony of her swarthy race, objected to the sum paid, as being an overcharge. As the poor quadruped kept on the even tenour of its way while this colloquy was proceeding, it had got some fair distance down the street before the tousle-headed proprietor observed it. Shouting out a frantic “Whoa!”—to which the animal paid not the slightest heed, he hobbled off after it, leaving



his highly-gifted lady to continue the expostulations. It has been the writer's enviable lot to hear, in his time, many choice specimens of nature's rugged eloquence unadorned, as it has left the lips of some member of the fairer portion of creation. Such, however, was the extreme unction which moved this noble old soul, and so unparalleled was the richness of her vocabulary, that all previous experiences had to "pale their uneffectual fires" before the torrent of her denunciatory expletives. Everett's tactics were magnificent! Had the old beldame been shrieking her objurgations in the desert of Sahara, Robert could not have appeared more oblivious of her presence! More calmly than most people will sit down to to-morrow's dinner did he sit there, reading his newspaper and smoking his pipe, with eyes that saw her not, and ears that, for all one could observe, heard not the faintest sound of her malevolent denunciations. Though the old virago screamed till she was black in the face—she was half-way that to start with—he never answered one syllable, but read and smoked calmly on, until, at the last, the old harridan, fairly beaten, and at her wits' end, slunk off down the street, after her lord, who, possibly, poor wretch, could not emulate the inimitable tactics of the gate-man.

But a few years previous to the abolition of the gate a four-horse coach ran, during the summer season, from London to Rochester. Such a revival of old coaching days was, to Everett, productive of the highest possible pleasure and interest. It was a sight to see him stand, his face aglow, as it passed by, and catch with great dexterity the coin pitched to him in payment of the toll. One day a certain individual who was, to an extent, a cripple, one leg being shorter than the other, was wheeling a truck from Rochester as the coach from London came bowling merrily along through the gate. Evidently, the propeller of the truck had but little admiration for this revival of the old coaching days, for heedless of the tootle-tootling of the guard's horn, he made but little effort to get out of the way, but bobbed his truck up and down in a very serene and leisurely manner that was nearly productive of an accident. As the coach passed by the offending master of the truck (by this time drawn to its right side of the road), the person driving it brought his whip with much dexterity, and no little force, and with a sounding smack, curling pliantly round the truckman's shoulders. The occupants of the coach

laughed, but the gentleman with the truck turned round, and with wonderful rage and vehemence, cursed the driver by his gods. There was a decided improvement on his former pace as he hobbled along towards the gate-keeper. "Can you tell me," he savagely queried of Everett, "the name of the person who is driving that coach?" "Yes," replied Robert, "that's Captain Laurie." "And did you see him strike me with that whip?" again enquired the driver of the truck. "I did," replied the gateman, "and be d——d if I ever saw a man more richly deserve it!" Of the two, the objurgations our friend of the "truck" bestowed upon Robert Everett out-Heroded his denunciations of Captain Laurie.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### DARKEST STROOD.

“The Dial spoke not, but it made shrewd signs and pointed full upon the stroke of Murder.”—Sir W. Scott: *Bride of Lammermoor*.

“Murder most foul as at the best it is, but this most foul, strange, and unnatural.”—Shakespeare: *Hamlet*.

COMPARED with its size and early population, Strood has an unenviable reputation for crime and criminals. Some early instances have been already related.

On Friday, April 19th, 1816, Mr. Chaplin, of Rochester, was driving home accompanied by a lady, and the chaise was stopped on Strood Hill by two men, one of whom clutched at the bridle but missed it, and hung on to the horse's neck. Mr. Chaplin urged the horse on for over 100 yards, but the thief managed to seize the horse's head, and obliged him to stop. Mr. Chaplin was relieved of his gold watch and money, and his lady companion lost her money. The robber wished them good night, and averred that necessity had driven him to the act. Whilst the robber was hanging to the horse's neck, his companion fired, and the bullet passed through the lady's bonnet. On Mr. Chaplin giving information at Strood gate, he learnt that Mr. Rodmell, and Mr. Aldersly, of Strood, had met two suspicious characters in the London road, and went in pursuit, and as anticipated, met them in the hollow near the basket maker's, Frindsbury; a scuffle ensued, which ended in the escape of the supposed delinquents, leaving however, a bundle behind them, which was thought would probably lead to their detection.\*

On 10th December, 1816, as Mr. Tadman, of Higham, was returning from Rochester Corn Market, he was attacked by four men, near the White Gate† on Strood Hill. Two shots were fired, one passed through his hat, the other entered the saddle under the right thigh, and lodged in the pommel without doing any

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\* *Kentish Chronicle*, April 26th, 1816.

† The four-crossway leading from Rede Court to Brompton Farm.

further injury, and putting spurs to his horse Mr. Tadman got home safe.\*

At the Maidstone Assizes in 1816, John Crowhurst was tried for stealing three banknotes at Strood, from the person of J. Anscombe, and sentenced to death, but was reprieved.†

On the 4th March, 1831, a particularly brutal murder was committed in the woods on the Maidstone Road, Rochester. Richard Falkland Taylor was the son of poor parents who had formerly seen better days. Their home was a wretched tenement in a Strood alley, then known as Russell's Court. The London, Chatham, and Dover Railway (Strood) Station now covers the site whereon these cottages stood. Formerly the Taylors had lived at Aylesford. At the time named they were in receipt of 4s. 6d. per week parish relief, which, in accordance with the law of "settlement," came from Aylesford, and from which village,



JOHN ANY BIRD BELL,

AGED 15 YEARS.

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Executed August 1st, 1831.

once a fortnight, the boy Taylor went to fetch it. On his way back, with the 9s. in his possession, Taylor was met by John Any Bird Bell and his younger brother, James Bell. On the pretext of showing him a near cut home, they enticed Taylor into the woods and murdered him. When the corpse was found, which was not for some considerable time, suspicion fell at once upon the Bells, and the father and his two sons were apprehended. They were taken before the magistrates, and, failing direct evidence, were on the point of being discharged. The case being

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\* *Kentish Chronicle*, December 20th, 1816.

† *Ibid*, August 2nd, 1816.

taken in hand by a member of the Rochester Bench of more than ordinary astuteness and ability, the younger boy confessed. The father was discharged. For their crime the two boys were tried at Maidstone, at the Summer Assize. The elder was condemned to death, and was hung—he being the first so executed—in front of the New Gaol at Maidstone, on the 1st August, 1831. He is stated to have been of “fair complexion and diminutive stature.” He confessed to his crime, and on the morning of his death his victim’s father—in his own and his wife’s name—assured the wretched boy of their forgiveness. The younger brother was sentenced to a term of penal servitude, during which he was taught the trade of a tailor. After serving his sentence, he worked at his trade for a clothier at Chatham. It is recorded\* that the younger Bell exhibited himself at Strood Fair, when he imitated, before succeeding audiences, the cries of the poor little victim, as he, in pantomime, there re-enacted the incidents of the awful crime! The writer has amply verified the truth of this fact; what apology can be made for the *audience* is beyond his power to suggest. The portrait of this juvenile criminal may interest the psychologist.

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A case that excited much interest was that of the murder of a Mrs. Bacon, at Ordnance Place, Chatham. The servant of Mrs. Bacon was suspected and arrested, but was acquitted. The home of this servant was at Barton’s Alley, Strood. This woman also exhibited herself in a show at Strood Fair and elsewhere, and as far as can be ascertained, never denied her guilt on these occasions, nor did she conceal her joy of escaping the law.

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In October, 1848, there was much excitement in Strood over the discovery of the dead body of a young woman named Mary Abbott, which was found lying head downwards in a ditch, at the back of the High Street, a little westward of what is now the “Amalgamation Inn.” This young woman, who was a native of Hawkhurst, had arrived from Gravesend, where she was in service, on her way to Maidstone. She stopped at the “Silver Oar,” to which house the Gravesend Omnibus known as Edwards’s then ran. The chambermaid at the “Silver Oar” noticed her change a half-sovereign. She was very respectably

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\* *Retrospections*: C. Roach Smith, p. 12, Vol. III.



clad. When the corpse was discovered there was barely water enough to cover her ; her bonnet was off ; some of her clothing and all of her money gone. A piece of carpet covered her head, and a portion of this carpet was tightly clutched in one hand. The body bore every evidence of being suffocated in the mud. Adjourned inquests were held at the "Angel," 24th and 31st October, when, at the latter date, Mary Hill, who lived opposite to a family named McGill, deposed to seeing the deceased enter McGill's house. She could not swear to the identity of the corpse, but Mrs. McGill had told her she knew the visitor, and exclaimed "Come in, mate," or "my dear." When asked by Mrs. Hill, after the murder, who her visitor was, Mrs. McGill told her that she was a young woman from Brompton.

Charlotte Stokes, wife of a wharfinger, also saw deceased cross the road and go into McGill's house. She marked her neat and orderly manner and attire, and that she was good looking. She positively identified the corpse as the person she then saw.

Sarah Elizabeth West and Frances Hawkins gave corroborative evidence.

Police Superintendent John Tuff stated that when he requested Mrs. McGill, at the Police Station, to give the name of her visitor, she replied, "with great airs," "I shan't! I won't! I don't intend to! So that's an answer for you."

Upon this case, on the 4th November, the Rochester magistrates held a "secret" investigation, lasting from ten in the morning till nine at night, when the husband of Mrs. McGill was ordered into custody.

The next adjourned inquest was held in the Guildhall, Rochester.

Mr. Richard Baker, master of Strood Union, testified to meeting the deceased in the company of James McGill, son of the persons into whose house Abbott was last seen to enter. He had to get aside to the wall to pass, as McGill refused his passing him on the right. He therefore noticed McGill particularly, also noticed the young woman, who smiled at him. Believed the dress she had on was the same as that in which corpse was found clad. The dress was unusually short (all the witnesses mention this). She was carrying a shawl on her arm. Her companion was cleaned, looked like a fisherman, and wore a pilot coat. He

noticed that he was pock-marked, particularly on the upper part of his face.

William Whiffen, a brazier, of Meeting Alley, had known the McGill family for years. Saw Mrs. McGill and her son in the High Street, Strood. Believed James resided in Gravesend. Had not, till then, seen him since second or third day of Strood Fair.

Mr. McGill claimed the carpet as theirs; said it had been in the ditch a month (the carpet proved to be free from smell, and not foul, as would have been the case had this been so).

Mrs. McGill afterwards declared the carpet was not theirs. They never had such, and she knew nothing of it.

A Mr. Page identified the carpet as his, and was positive it had not been long in the ditch.

Mr. Church assisted McGill the elder to get body out of ditch. There was no evidence of a struggle, and ditch was undisturbed. Did not see the carpet, nor did McGill mention it.

Mrs. McGill denied ever saying that her visitor was "a young woman from Brompton."

Mr. Baker and several others testified she had stated the reverse to them. She had also admitted the same to the officer when in his custody at the "Angel" enquiry, but denied it when giving evidence.

The jury returned a verdict of Wilful Murder against Thomas McGill, Maria McGill, and James McGill.

Friday, 7th November.—City Magistrates commit prisoners for trial on the capital charge. A vast concourse of people assembled to see prisoners removed to Maidstone.

Lent Assizes, March, 1849. Crown Court, before Mr. Justice Parke.

John Church said the face of the deceased woman, Mary Abbott, did not appear to have been under the water. The back of the head lay in the water, and a dirty circle marked the height it reached.

Mary Ann Muzzard, fellow servant with Abbott, had frequently seen McGill in Abbott's company, speaking to her half-an-hour at a time.

Richard Baker, Master of Strood Union, saw a bit of the

carpet in deceased's hand so tightly clenched that it broke to pieces on his trying to extract it. Heard Mrs. McGill, in answer to a question of Mrs. Acworth, say that deceased was not the young woman who came to her house on Saturday. She was a respectable young woman from Brompton, and she did not stay a minute.

McGills owned the carpet, and said it was theirs.

William Wibblin, doctor, said death was by suffocation, not drowning. He had been in Paris and had had considerable experience with corpses from the Seine.

The Jury, after deliberating half-an-hour, returned a verdict of Not Guilty. The case occupied twelve hours.

Some time afterwards the McGills moved from this locality.

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Some years ago a wood tablet stood in Strood Churchyard, marking the grave of "An Unknown Thief." The circumstances surrounding this case were peculiar and sensational.

About three o'clock on Thursday, 7th October, 1869, three men went into the bar of the "Cricketers' " Inn, which faces the Creek and wharfs in Commercial Road. Calling for drink, two of the men engaged the occupants' attention, whilst the third man stole upstairs to rob the premises. The thief succeeded in breaking open a locked drawer, and also forced others. Those below were startled on hearing the thud of a heavy fall, and the servant of the house immediately ran upstairs, and there discovered a man lying at full length on the floor, apparently dead. A doctor and the police were sent for, and the medical man (Dr. A. H. Sunnyland, *locum tenens* to Dr. Langston) on his arrival, pronounced life to be extinct. In the thief's pockets were found:—In copper, £2 7s. 2½d.; in gold, £1; in silver, £2 2s. 6d.; two silver watches, valued at £8; one silver chain, valued at 10s.; one gold chain, valued at £4; and eight skeleton keys and a jemmy. The said tools were subsequently described by the police as being of beautiful workmanship. The two companions had bolted, but one, named Hall, was arrested at the "Coach and Horses" public house, Strood Hill,\* and, after several remands, was sentenced, at the January sessions, 1870, to five years' penal servitude. The identity of the dead man was afterwards established. His name was George Derrick, a native of Bristol; he had previously served a term of penal servitude. The money and valuables found in the thief's pockets had been stolen from the landlady of the "Cricketers' Arms."

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\* See Illustration, "Rochester from Strood Hill."

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### STROOD AND FRINDSBURY VOLUNTEERS.

"No muckle to fight for, Sir? Is na there the country to fight for, and the burnside . . . and the hearths o' the gude-wives, . . . and the bits o' weans that come toddling to play wi' me? . . . Diel! An I had as good pith as I hae gude-will . . . I'd gie some o' them a gude kemping."

*The Antiquary.*—Sir W. Scott.

EXACTLY a hundred years ago there was the fear of a French invasion, and John Bull at once donned a uniform, seized a



THE "DREDGING BOAT" INN—SOUTH END OF OLD BRIDGE.

*From an Old Print.*

musket, and enrolled himself as a Volunteer. In Kent, every town and village afforded its quota. At the Peace of Amiens many of these corps were disbanded, but on the breaking out of the war again in 1803, they were re-embodied. From Kent the Government asked for a quota of 4,663. Ere the first six months of the movement had elapsed this county furnished a total of 18,996. Our district was well represented; there was a corps at Rochester, a joint one at Rochester and Chatham, one at Chatham and Gillingham, one at Cobham, six companies, called

the Medway Volunteers, with headquarters at Rochester; and a corps enrolled as the "Strood and Friendsbury (sic) Volunteers." The date of formation was the 24th May, 1798, and the members agreed to serve anywhere in the military district "in case of invasion or imminent danger thereof." The following is the

#### MUSTER ROLL OF THE STROOD AND FRINDSBURY VOLUNTEERS.

Captain—Francis Barrow. 1st Lieutenant—Barnaby Howes.  
2nd Lieutenant—John Gibbs.

Drill Sergeant—Sergeant Hardy, appointed by Major-General Fox, but re-called, when the duty devolved upon Sergeant Gritbatch, of the Chatham Division of Marines.

Sergeant on Permanent Pay—G. Brown.

Sergeants not on Permanent Pay—R. Sayers, James Bromley, Phillip Dive.

Corporals—I. Normenton, John Carter, James Lee.

Drummer on Permanent Pay—John Pullin.

Privates—Jonathan Bowman, James Browning, Robert Bassett, James Baker, William Bradley, John Chalklin, Thomas Chalklin, James Cross, Robert Coles, Thomas Cable, James Cooper, William Cox, Robert Cox, John Dowsett, Henry Dunning, William Dunk, Robert Daniels, John Dicks, Joseph Elliott, David Freeland, William French, John Fox, John Fulkes, William Foster, John Gouge, Richard Hards, George Hodge, John Hutchins, Henry Huxley, Joseph King, William Knight, Augustine Knocker, Charles Lidwell, Robert Lamb, John Langley, Robert Lewis, Thomas Lee, Thomas Netherwood, James Norman, Richard Philpott, Owen Parsons, Henry Shorter, John Stubbersfield, John Scoon, Thomas Smith, John Spakes, Thomas Spakes, John Stairns, Thomas Thompson, Edward Virgoe,\* William Virgoe, James Weeks, Cornelius West, Francis Whitbread, James Williams, John Wellard.

The following are the names of those who subsequently joined:—

William Allams, William Allingham, William Billingham, Robert Berrisford, Michael Butler, John Caddy, David Day, Joseph Fairhall, Thomas Harper, William Hills, Thomas Kemp, Henry Kibble, Richard Letchford, Robert Lewcock, Neale Love, John Marsh, George Miller, William Moore, Hugh Monday, Edward Page, Joseph Price, Nicholas Rendle, William Sampson, John Scott, Richard Whiffin, George Wilson, and William Winsborrow.

The captain received pay at the rate of 9s. 5d. per diem for each day of duty; the first lieutenant, 4s. 4d.; the second, 3s. 5d.;

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\* Virgoe was employed to make the uniforms for the corps. See also chapter on "Old Workhouse" (p. 289).



the drill sergeant, 1s. 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.; all the rest, 1s. each. The pay of the officers was devoted to the purchase of articles not provided by Government. Captain Barrow certified that he had provided clothing for fifty-eight non-commissioned officers and private men of the Strood and Friendsbury Volunteers under his command. His first bill to the War Office is as follows:—

Amount of 198 days' pay for 1 sergeant, from	£	s.	d.
24 May to 24 December, 1798, at 1s. 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.			
per day .....	15	9	4 $\frac{3}{4}$
Do. 198 days' billet, at 2d. per day .....	1	12	6
Do. 198 days' pay, for 1 drummer, at 1s. 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.			
per day .....	11	6	10 $\frac{3}{4}$
Do. 189 days' billet, for do., at 2d. per day ....	1	12	6
A pair of drums (cost) .....	2	7	0

I certify upon honor that I have actually paid the sergeant and drummer above specified, as also for one pair of drums, the sum of £38 8s. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

*Francis Barrow*  
*Capt. of Comp. 7*  
*May 13. 1799*

SIGNATURE OF CAPTAIN BARROW.

The corps, 64 in number, attended the review of the Kent Volunteers, in Mote Park, August 1st, 1799.

In the pay list for July 1789, Captain Barrow writes that in consequence of the intended review, it was necessary to drill three days a week, and begs for the favourable consideration of the War Office, so that reasonable pay might be granted for such loss of time. For the review the corps received one day's pay for all ranks, amounting to £3 19s. 2d.

The corps was disbanded in 1802, and re-embodied on 8th July, 1803. In the pay sheets is a certificate signed by H. Thursden, Lieutenant-Colonel Inspecting Field Officer, to the effect that John Fox served three years as a private, during the last war, in the present corps was promoted to corporal, and has drilled and trained recruits, and is fit for a drill sergeant, but apparently Daniel Lyons, of the 1st Regiment of Guards, was appointed. Other officers appeared on the re-embodiment.

Lieutenant Gibbs took the place of Howes. Lieutenant Hulkes was a miller, brother of James Hulkes, M.P. for Rochester, &c.

Lieutenant Hulkes resigned 27th of November, 1805, and William Boghurst was appointed in his stead. The following is the financial statement:—

	£	s.	d.
1799.....	92	11	1 $\frac{3}{4}$
1800.....	41	14	0
1801.....	88	1	4
1802 (pay sheet missing) .....			
1803 (8th of July, to 24th of December) .....			
Clothing.....	£105	10	6
Pay .....	£136	6	0
Contingent .....	£6	12	0—
1804.....	248	8	6
Pay .....	£292	9	11
Clothing.....			
One Sergeant .....	£3	3	9
Contingency.....	£30	0	0—
1805.....	325	13	8
1806.....	273	3	2
1807.....	179	5	8
Pay.....	£85	2	0
Clothing .....	£25	7	0—
1808.....	110	9	0
1809 (to 20th of March, date of disbanding)..	87	11	0
	27	18	6

The accounts were paid by bills drawn on Messrs. Day and Co., bankers,\* Rochester. On the last summary sheet, some War Office accountant has written in red ink "Examined September 11th, 1813," and another has initialled in black "Date of Settlement, January 11th, 1814." Truly, War Office methods tally with the law's delay.

Judging from the pay sheets, Captain Barrow was a very careful and industrious officer. He attended well; in the remarks column he enters the date of the joining of each recruit, and opposite other names he puts explanatory notes, such as "Gone into the Dockyard," "Resigned from ill health," "Discharged having fits," "Discharged for non-attendance," "Promoted to Corporal," "Left the neighbourhood," "Resigned from age," "Resigned from lameness," and against one name, "Dismissed for improper conduct." He was economical in the use of government stationery; the pay sheets were ruled for daily use, but as the corps only drilled twice a week, Barrow wrote "The columns (six), being sufficiently numerous, the Muster days are made out for the Months of February and March, in this Return." This evidently did not square with official routine,

\* Afterwards acquired by the London and Provincial Bank.

and he seems to have had this crime pointed out to him by the War Office, for in the following return he concludes with a memorandum that "In future, the sheets will be made up to the 24th of every succeeding month, agreeable to the printed instructions." On another sheet he remarks that "The blank columns denote that in consequence of bad weather, the Company was unable to take the field on those days." On one sheet he writes "Two Fifers are attached to the Company: query, are they entitled to pay," and it seems they were not, for in the next return the names of the two fifers are erased.

The Strood and Frindsbury Volunteers drilled in "Mr. Lawler's field;" and the "Crispin Inn" bears strong evidence to being their favourite gathering place.

It was at the "Crispin" that a certain meeting took place which resulted in consequences that must have keenly concerned our old friend Mr. John, otherwise "King" Gibbs. This meeting, as the following particulars will show, evidently brought to a climax a discontent and dislike widely felt among the gentlemen of Strood and Frindsbury who made up the rank and file of our citizen soldiers of that day.

Mr. John Gibbs—whose personality is deeply graven in our Local Act, our ugly Church, and the big debt which followed it,—was, as will be noted, second Lieut. of the corps these notes concern.

Captain Barrow, whose sign manual appears on page 340—as a result of that "Crispin" meeting, laid complaint against Mr. Gibbs, of conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman, which is recorded as follows:—

"A minute detail of the proceedings of the Court of Enquiry on the conduct of Captain Francis Barrow and Lieut. John Gibbs, of the Strood and Frindsbury Volunteers, London, 1804.

"Court composed of George Gunning, Esq. (of Frindsbury), president; Lieut.-Col. Hollingsworth, of the Maidstone Volunteers; Captain Thompson, of the Rochester Volunteers; and Captain Baker, of the Chatham and Rochester Volunteers.

There were six charges:—

1.—"Neglect of duty, attending nine times out of thirty-six muster days in 1800; in 1801 only five times out of forty-four musters.

2.—"When on 30th July, 1799, the corps was ordered to parade at three o'clock in the morning to proceed to the review at Maidstone, he did not go with the corps, but in his

own carriage, and when he took up a wrong station, on being told of it by his senior, Lieut. Howes, said—"if he was wrong, he should keep so."

3.—"When the corps was ordered to join the others, to fire a *feu de joie*, on the evening of the illuminations for the defeat of the Dutch Fleet, would not fall in, and tried to persuade a private named Bassett to not march with the corps.

4.—"On the morning of the inspection a ball cartridge was found in one of the men's boxes, when Captain Barrow ordered all to be searched, Lieut. Gibbs dropped to the rear and said—"Lord, how you have frightened the Captain!"

5.—"Refused to fall into drill, saying he would 'have nothing to do with the corps while that fool Howes had the command.'

6.—"So disliked, that on the re-establishment many refused to serve if he had a commission."

Lord Romney considered the charges proved, dismissed Mr. Gibbs, and appointed Thomas Edward Hulkes ensign in his place. As will be noted above, Thomas E. Hulkes resigned 27th November, 1805.

From evidence, it appeared that the privates were mostly labourers and workmen. There was, during the first enthusiasm apparently, a subscription to clothe the men in uniforms, which, though understood to be a Government liability to provide, was either incomplete, or not ready when required. Payments were also thus made to working men for loss of time.

The corps took part in keeping order at Chatham on the occasion of some riots due to the high price of provisions. Gibbs also, it is alleged, "fell out without permission" when on the march, and "went home down Gun Lane."

There was a challenge to a duel by a pert young officer of the regulars to Lieut. Howes, for which the officer was dismissed the service, and a garrison order issued warning officers against ridiculing the Volunteers "who have come forward with a degree of loyalty and spirit which do them the greatest credit."

Touching the dismissal of the officer and the garrison order above noted, it may be mentioned that the Volunteer movement has met with much ridicule throughout its history.

There is the old conundrum, "Why are the Volunteers like Lord Nelson?" Because the last thing Nelson did was to die for his country, and that is the last thing the Volunteers will do.

An old song had a couplet—

“But should a Frenchman on our coast appear,  
The Lord have mercy on each Volunteer.”

Like many other great movements, that of the Volunteers has outlived the age of ridicule to become accepted as a national safeguard, and, to-day, is thus rightfully and gratefully recognised.

Captain Barrow resided at the house in the High Street formerly Mr. Wickham's, now converted into Mr. Cobb's furniture stores.

The “Howes” were an old Strood family, who formerly lived in Bryant House (now Mr. Barker's), and owned the Bryant estate. To the family of Bryant it passed by marriage.

Mr. John Gibbs was a former Clerk of the Peace for Rochester, and was Mayor in 1829. In his time of affluence, he lived in Claremont House, fronting Wykeman Street, now owned and occupied by Dr. R. Ross Brown.

Mr. Gibbs died 22nd February, 1850. He was buried at Frindsbury; his tomb adjoins the east boundary wall of the churchyard, and is in line with the chancel window of the Church.

Mr. Gibbs published the pamphlet (62 pp., demy 8vo.) from which the above items are taken. Its preface is dated March, 1804, its printer being G. Woodfall, London. It should be stated that Mr. Gibbs having, as he says in his preface, delayed the publication of the above “minute detail,” so “that every idea of warmth or disappointment, which otherwise might be imputed to him, should be removed,” says his motive in publication was “that the public may (with its usual impartiality) have an opportunity of deciding how far the Lord Lieutenant's determination was sanctioned by the evidence detailed in the following pages.” Beyond these words and some italicised words and sentences, no other personal note appears. The writer thought it but fair to Mr. Gibbs' memory to mention these facts.



## CHAPTER XXX.

### OUR INDUSTRIES.

"I know not why commerce in England should not have its old families rejoicing to be connected with commerce from generation to generation. I think it is a subject of sorrow, and almost of scandal, when those families who have either acquired or recovered station and wealth through commerce, turn their backs upon it, and seem to be ashamed of it."

—*William Ewart Gladstone.*

"God has been bountiful to the human race in this age. . . . He has given us to see Titans enslaved by man; steam harnessed to our carriages and ships; galvanism tamed into an alphabet—a gamut, and its metal harp-strings stretched across the earth malgre, mountains, and the sea. . . . Yet old women and children of the pen say this is a bad, a small, a lifeless, an unpoetic age—and they are not mistaken. For they lie."—*Charles Reade.*

### CEMENT MANUFACTURE.

THOUGH this industry has sprung into importance during recent years, it has attained greater dimensions, in the aggregate, than any other form of local production. Early in the present century an old oil mill stood on the spot now covered by Messrs. Tingey's Cement Works, in the Quarry. Probably the first steam engine—great marvel of discovery at that date—ever erected in Kent was one built by Boulton and Watt, which was placed in position to propel the machinery of this old oil mill. It was of the type known as the "sun and planet" motion, with a wood beam. About sixty years since, this oil mill was converted into the pioneer cement factory, Mr. George Burge being the enterprising owner and moving spirit in this innovation.

Situated some distance further East were three large ship-building slips belonging to Mr. Joseph Brindley, of whom mention is also made elsewhere. Mr. Brindley was a nephew of Lord Nelson, and the original ship, the *Aboukir*, was built on one of these slips. In the attempt to launch this vessel the craft had the evil fate to heel over, and she had to be broken up. The timbers taken from the *Aboukir* were used by Mr. Brindley in building the mansion on the Frindsbury Road (Miss Formby's), and to which, from this cause, he gave it the name of "Aboukir House." It is doubtful that he lived to occupy it.

It is also a matter of certainty\* that Brindley built the *Shannon*. It will be remembered that this particular vessel fought an immortal duel with the *Chesapeake*, in Boston Bay, 1st June, 1813. The *Shannon* was a frigate, 38 guns, 330 men. The *Chesapeake* carried 376 men, and mounted 50 guns. The engagement lasted but eleven minutes, when the American vessel struck her colours. The carnage of these few minutes was fearful; so severe and accurate was the firing, that both



QUARRY FACTORIES.—A FOREST OF CHIMNEYS.

From a Photo by A. G. Blackman.

commanders were killed. In his poem, *My Lost Youth*, Longfellow says—

“I remember the sea fight far away,  
How it thundered o’er the tide;  
And the dead captains as they lay  
In their graves o’erlooking the tranquil bay,  
Where they in battle died.”

Mr. Brindley occupied the Quarry House, a highly interesting Jacobean mansion lately demolished (1897), to which reference is made later on in this chapter. He afterwards moved to the

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\* By the courtesy of Admiral-Superintendent Andoe and the Dockyard officials, this fact has been verified. The *Shannon* (the second vessel of that name and class built by Messrs. Brindley) was launched on the 5th May, 1806. The first-named vessel was totally wrecked on the night of the 10th December, 1803. She went ashore on the French coast. All hands were saved, but were taken prisoners by the French.—See *James’ Naval History*, Vol. III., p. 206.

Manor House, Frindsbury, and it was while resident here that Mr. Brindley built Aboukir House.

At the time the first cement factory was erected, its total output was from fifty to sixty tons per week. Afterwards, Messrs. Larke and White built a cement factory which stood on a site North-east of the Canal, which is now partly covered by the wood yard of the Baltic Saw Mills Company. These works were totally destroyed in or about 1880 (?) The output of this establishment was about 160 tons per week. The Baltic site is the property of the South Eastern Railway Company, who, possibly in view of



THE "QUARRY."—OUR CHALK ROCKS.

*From a Photo by A. G. Blackman.*

future docks, or other developments, do not evince any inclination to alienate the land for any purpose. The following is the approximate number of hands employed in the chalk works and cement manufacture in the Quarry locality, and its united output.

There are seven factories (the first, Messrs. Tingey's, being erected in 1851), employing a total of 750 hands, and producing together an average output of 3,900 tons of cement per week. The land forming the extent of marsh and chalk rock upon which these factories are built, belong—that portion North-west to the Dean and Chapter of Rochester Cathedral; and the other to the estate of Rochester Bridge.

The natural advantages of the Medway for the manufacture

of cement appears absolutely unrivalled. This noble river, offering quick and easy access to the sea, and from thence to the wide world, has cut its deep channel through the chalk rocks whose spurs run down, in places, to the very edge of its waters. Chalk is one of the great essential raw products for cement, and nature has placed it close at hand and in unlimited quantities. For ages, the Medway has been carrying from the hillsides that stretch along its winding course, the alluvial deposits taken down into its waters by the rain; this in turn it has deposited upon the banks and marshes that sweep for miles its lower



QUARRY VIADUCT.

*From a Photo by A. G. Blackman.*

reaches. This river mud is the great element in successful production of cement. Beneficent Nature has so alloyed this deposit with all the essential elements of cohesive strength (iron, etc.), and its mineral characters are so remarkably blended, that it appears, intelligently governed, to be an industry hard to be opposed by any district less favourably situated, and though subject to fluctuations of demand, it yet gives every promise of permanence.

#### WICKHAM FACTORY (MARTIN, EARLE, & CO.).

This establishment was built in 1890-1. Great enterprise and enormous expenditure have been put into this undertaking,

the wharfrage being the most extensive on the Medway, being half a mile long, and often having as many as twenty-five barges alongside it, loading and unloading. The capital spent upon premises, wharf, and engineering works, etc., has absorbed nearly £500,000.

About 1893, the pioneer founders of this firm were in financial straits, and the property passed into the hands of the Sheriff; from whom Mr. J. B. Martin purchased the undertaking for £14,000. Mr. Martin carried it on single-handed for a year, employing about 60 hands, and paying away in wages about £100 weekly. It now finds employment for over 800 hands, and over £1,000 per week is now paid for wages. In 1893 its weekly output was 150 tons; it is now 2,000 tons, and this enormous output the firm are now arranging to double. The Company possess a large ship of their own, purchased at a cost of £9,000, which receives its loads from lighters and barges below Bridge; and an extensive engineering branch has just been added—opened on Saturday, June 17th, 1899—which employs 100 men. The chief object of this latter departure is the supply of engineering material for the works, and that want supplied, to cater for the public also. The concern is exceedingly well officered, and the business enterprise of the firm takes quick advantage of every improvement that invention can supply.

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#### AVELING AND PORTER, LTD.

Mr. Aveling commenced these works in 1858 in Rochester, on the premises formerly occupied by Mr. Chaplin,\* a large proprietor of coach horses in the coaching days. The foundry was on the site of the present works at Strood, to which the Rochester works were eventually transferred.

Mr. Aveling belonged to an old Cambridgeshire family, who held lands in the Isle of Ely for some four hundred years, and down to the time of his grandfather, who was high sheriff for the Counties of Cambridge and Huntingdon, in 1802. From his father he should have inherited a large fortune, but unfortunately, or fortunately, he did not. The family came into Kent, and Kent gave them a hearty welcome. The County, and more

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\* 27, Edwards Yard.



especially Rochester and Strood, rejoices that the family did adopt Kent for their new County.

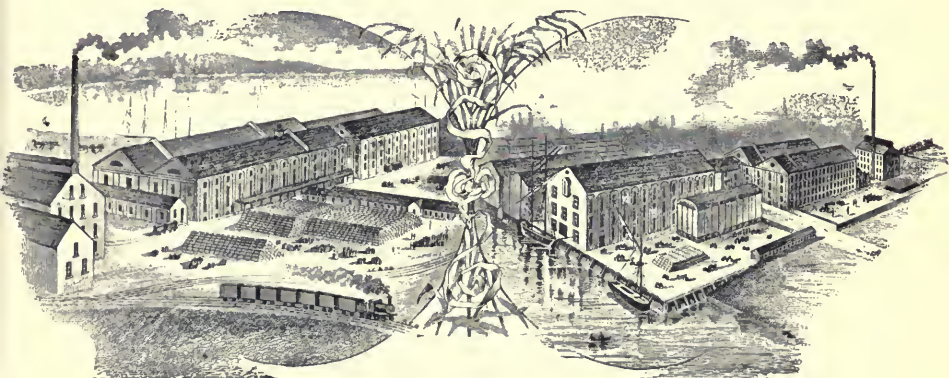
The invention, design, and manufacture of road engines (for which the firm is now famous), was, in the early times, a very arduous undertaking. Prejudices and opposition to the use of engines on roads were abundant, and Acts of Parliament made them almost prohibitory. The first successful road or traction engine was produced in 1860, and this was for the first time exhibited at the Royal Agricultural Society's Show at Canterbury, in July, 1860. So little importance did the Council attach to road locomotion, that this engine was classed among the miscellaneous articles. In 1871, the same Society offered a prize for the best engine of the class, and Messrs Aveling and Porter obtained this prize. The nominal value of the prize was £50, the experiments and trials cost £500 to obtain it; and its real value to the firm was estimated at £10,000.

At the Great Exhibition of 1862, one of these engines was exhibited, and the invention became known to the world. Mr. Aveling was Mayor of Rochester in 1868. He was a member of the institution of Civil Engineers, Chevalier of the Legion of Honour (France), and Knight of the Order of Francis Joseph (Austria), and died in March, 1880. The works now turn out one of these large road engines per day. There are 1,000 men employed, and more than £70,000 a year is distributed in the towns. This sum is not merely collected and turned over in the place, but it is drawn from abroad and distant parts of Great Britain. There are 220 lathes and other tools, and pieces of machinery valued at about £25,000 to £30,000, for the manufacture of these engines.

America and Germany, notwithstanding the almost prohibitive duties, are supplied from the Strood works. The South-Eastern Railway Company has its siding and connecting ramifications through the works. There is a large water frontage, which allows vessels from the North, laden with coal and iron, to come alongside the wharf and discharge. The increase in the works has hitherto been to double their size about every six years. May they continue to do so. It is a very gratifying fact to note, that at every Exhibition or Show, both in England and abroad, Messrs. Aveling and Porter's engines have, in competition, ever taken the first prize.

## STEWART BROTHERS &amp; SPENCER'S OIL SEED MILLS.

In 1870, this firm established itself at Branbridges, near Tunbridge. A short life for the enterprise was predicted by many of the neighbouring agriculturists and others, who were not quick to grasp the advantages offered by this new form of food for cattle. Others there were, however, among the more advanced and scientific ranks, who held a different opinion, and the result once more goes to prove that wisdom is justified of her children. Trade grew, and in 1879 the firm purchased the advantageous site upon which their mills now stand, and to this spot, in 1880, the business was transferred. A better selection for



OIL SEED MILLS.—MESSRS. STEWART BROS., &amp; SPENCER.

works of this description it would be very difficult to make. Vessels of 2,000 to 3,000 tons burden come direct to the mills laden with seeds of various descriptions from ports in Egypt, India, North and South Russia, and from both sides of the American Continent. The works are provided with a siding, in direct communication with the S.E.R. system. This great facility enables the firm, without strain, to distribute a thousand tons per week of its various manufactures. In November 1884, the partners had the misfortune to sustain an outbreak of fire upon the premises; the result being the greatest local conflagration in living memory. The entire premises on the West of the Canal Road, were totally destroyed. After smouldering with occasional outbreaks for over a week, the fire at last died out. The firm immediately started to rebuild, and though the original premises were replete with up-to-date

machinery and appliances, the latter were constructed to excel even the former. An artesian well has been sunk to the green-sand, to a depth of 750 feet, and from this source an abundant supply of the purest water is obtained, which rises to the height of 40-50 feet above the surface. The machinery runs day and night, from Monday morning till Saturday evening. A large refinery has also been erected for the purification of cotton seed oil. It is well fitted with every modern appliance, and includes a completely fitted laboratory, which is under the supervision of resourceful and skilful chemists. The oil, when refined, is used for the table for salads, and also for cooking. For the latter purposes it is now superseding olive oil, from which it is hardly distinguishable. The oil is also largely exported to the continent, where it is chiefly used in the manufacture of margarine. The firm manufacture a pure soap from vegetable oil, for which a great future is confidently expected and predicted. It is claimed to possess unusual advantages for the laundry; to be particularly free from any injurious contamination to which animal fats are liable; has remarkable detergent qualities, and is, at the same time, a pure healthy soap, and is a highly delightful soap for toilet purposes also.

The property is freehold, and covers about four acres. The firm comprises five partners, viz:—Mr. Halley Stewart, J.P. (late M.P. for Spalding, Lincs.), Mr. Ebenezer Stewart, Mr. Knowles Spencer, Mr. Reginald Halley Stewart, and Mr. Percy Malcolm Stewart. The firm has also a large mill and offices in the City of London. The number of employees at the Rochester Works is about 200.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### THE FLOODS.

“Indeed, the imminent hour had come, and the flood was rushing down with a fatal roar, answered by a fainter murmur from the rising sea.—Robert Buchanan: *Shadow of the Sword*.

#### A GREAT DELIVERANCE.

7th August, 1884. “Resolved, that the Charity Commissioners having sanctioned the grant of £3,000 from the Bridge-



STROOD ESPLANADE, DURING THE HIGH TIDE.  
1898.

*From a Photo by L. M. Cobb.*

wardens towards the embankment [of Strood], the Corporation be again *urged* to carry out the work without delay.”\*

This entry speaks volumes. At this period, at constantly recurring intervals, the low-lying parts of Strood were deluged by every abnormal high tide of the Medway, the writer having personally seen boats able to row up the High Street nearly to the Angel. Down the Institute passage the water poured like a little river; whilst the neighbourhood at the back of Temple

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\* From the *Trustees' Minute Book*.



Street [see also plate: *Retrospections*, Vol. III., p. 121], was covered until it resembled a great lake, imprisoning the wretched inhabitants. In that woe-begone spot the foul contents of water closets were washed into the poor people's homes, and an indescribable filth permeated the fetid spot for months; scarcely was it overcome, before another watery invasion again repeated the former horrors. Almost every house in the High Street and North Street had its basement flooded, and much damage to property, risk of life, and even death, sometimes followed. The late Mr. Roach Smith suffered severely by these floods. His



THE HIGH TIDE, AT SOUTH REAR OF THE HIGH STREET.  
1898.

From a Photo by L. M. Cobb.

plantation of choice fruit trees was ruined by the action of the salt water which stayed on his land, as it did on others' also, until it soaked away; and the brick walls which fenced his ground were swept down in breaches, yards wide, by the weight and fury of the invading waters. Following the inundation of Nov. 1874, a very severe one, Mr. Roach Smith alone—through the then M.P. for the City—petitioned Parliament for an abatement of this terror, and again and again appealed, through the Local and National Press, to the same end: but all ineffectually. Finally, the Bridgewardens (whose name, office, and sympathy deserve lasting remembrance in Strood) came to our rescue, in the beneficent manner above recorded, and those evil days now remain but a memory.



It may be added that in April, 1886, Mr. Roach Smith published a widely-circulated pamphlet [Sweet & Sons, Strood] against the Corporation and their past apathy. An indictment more caustic and scathing it has seldom been the writer's lot to peruse.

Touching the question of past apathy by the City Corporation at and above the stage of the matter here quoted, Mr. Apsley



HIGH STREET, STROOD, FROM THE CAB STAND.  
1898.

Sketch, from a Photo by W. Naylar.

Kennette, the Town-Clerk, has, in answer to the writer's queries, kindly written the following :—

15th June, 1898.

"Dear Sir, . . . . Although I was not then Town Clerk, I was present at many meetings. . . . The whole question of Strood Embankment was decided upon and actually begun before the Bridgewardens, *at the suggestion of the Corporation*, so generously came forward to help, and the £3,000 they granted was supplemented largely by the Council."

The late Sir William Hayward somewhat traverses this statement, which, of course, in both cases, is a matter more a

question of memory than of *bona fides*. Personally, seeing the long time the matter dragged its weary and vexatious delay, it is difficult to entirely acquit the authorities of blame. In defence of the Corporation's conduct may be urged the question of Riparian ownership and liability, and the expenditure of public money, but the cause was urgent, and delays brought great evils upon innocent sufferers.

Abnormal tides appear to be an event of periodical occurrence, accounts of which we have as far back as 1158 and 1235.\*



CANAL, ROAD UNDER WATER: AT THE PIER.  
1898.

From a Photo by J. H. Weekes.

“Full and Particular Account of a Prodigious Spring Tide” is contained in a very scarce pamphlet in the Bodleian Library. And though, as is usual in tracts of the time, the subject is practically exhausted in the long drawn out title, it is a graphic story. The particular tide noted occurred on the 10th February, 1735. Its relation of incidents chiefly concern the “Hundred of How” (Hoo), and tells of loss of life—men and horses “at the plow” being suddenly overwhelmed and drowned. The whole pamphlet was photographed and re-printed in the *Chatham News*, 20th February, 1897. Other great tides are noted in 1682 and 1791. The *South-Eastern Gazette*, 21st February, 1854, also makes mention of a

\* See also p. 29.

like disastrous overflow. There was another one Sunday night in 1874. That which occurred on Monday, 29th November, 1898, was very severe, and in all probability has seldom been exceeded. But for the embankment, the sufferings of Strood would have been appalling. As it was, boats could ply up the High Street; and North Street, for a great extent, presented the appearance of a canal. Messrs. Aveling's premises were flooded, and the fires raked out to avoid explosions. The Cement Factories were invaded, and the water in the canal raised to such a height that the greatest care was needed to prevent the vessels lying there.



NORTH STREET, FROM THE CORNER OF HIGH STREET.

1898.

*From a Photo by P. Jordan.*

from being left stranded on the banks as the tide ebbed. The Railway was covered to the height of the axles of the trucks in the goods department, and the tunnel was invaded to the extent of a mile of its length. The wharves, mills, and all residences along the Canal Road were flooded, and great damage done.

Some idea of the infliction may be imagined by the illustrations we are able to print.

Access to the Isle of Grain, except by boat, was impossible for several days; a curious incident being that a large stack of hay was floated from a field just beyond the Stoke siding, and deposited across the road, effectually blocking it until cut away.



Hundreds of sheep were drowned on the marshes. A man, locally known as "Polly" Brown, had a terrible experience at Oakham Ness Island. As the tide rose the poor fellow, who was paralysed on one side, climbed upon a post. His experience during the hours of darkness—for he spent the night in this terrible situation—was simply horrible. A large number of rats were driven up by the tide, and these frightened creatures also climbed the post of safety and crawled all over the wretched man, who, on account of his affliction was unable to beat them off. All he could do was to maintain his position. He was rescued the following morning in a delirious and exhausted condition. Happily, though many marvellous escapes were recorded, no loss of human life occurred.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

### A LIST OF BENEFACTIONS.

“The poor shall never cease out of the land.”—*Deut. xv. 7.*

#### RICHARD WATTS'S CHARITY.

RICHARD WATTS, by his will dated the 22nd August, 1579, devised certain Estates to Trustees for the Relief of Six Poor Wayfarers nightly, and for the benefit of the Poor of the City of Rochester.

This bequest—after providing for the relief of the six poor wayfarers, was to be devoted to the uses of the poor after the following manner, i.e. :—“A quantity of hemepe, flax, yarne, woole, and other necessary stuff to be alwayes in store within the said Citty, and from tyme to tyme to be by them (Mayor and Citizens) delivered to the poore of the said Citty of Rochester and the lymitts and precincts thereof.”

At the time the original bequest was made this Charity produced £36 16s. 8d., per annum, which sum barely sufficed to keep alive the provision for the relief of the six poor wayfarers. During his lifetime Richard Watts had leased his London estate for a term of 99 years at a rental of £8 per annum. The Chatham property then yielded £13 6s. 8d. In 1865, the London estate was sold to the Metropolitan Railway Company, the purchase money being invested in acquiring the St. Margaret's building estate, Rochester. The Parish of St. Nicholas, Rochester, at the date of the original bequest, constituted almost the entire area formerly encompassed by the ancient city walls. In the hands of the Mayor and Corporation the principal powers of administering these funds were placed, subject to yearly inspection by the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral, or the Wardens of Rochester Bridge. By the year 1672 the income of this Charity had grown to over £300 per annum, with a certain increase to over £500 at the expiration of another 24 years.

Its administration, during the interval, furnishes one more illustration of human greed in the perversion of charitable trusts.



In the central Parish of St. Nicholas, chiefly dwelt those persons who held the keys of civic and ecclesiastical power, and St. Nicholas' Parish claimed, and exclusively used<sup>d</sup>, the income from this Charity for the relief of the poor within their district. The result was that while the Parishes of St. Margaret and Strood groaned under the heavy exactions of poor law relief, St. Nicholas paid all such liabilities out of the income arising from Watts's bequest, and lived poor-rate free. There is also reason to believe that their poorer political adherents were bribed from these funds to bolster up an evil and vicious system. As this particular Parish was the richest in the City, and therefore the better able to bear its lawful burdens, the injustice was the greater by contrast.

On the 18th February, 1672, in the persons of two paupers from St. Margaret's and Strood v. the Mayor and Citizens of Rochester, the mal-administration of these funds was brought before Sir Heneage Finch, Bart., Attorney General, with the result that Strood was allotted the sum of £20 per annum, and St. Margaret's £30, with an equal pro rata increase as the Charity grew richer. "William Twopenny" and "George St. Lo Man" are the signatories to this document.

Even yet Strood was not clear of difficulty. Anciently, and down to living memory, the North side of Strood High Street, and the east side of North Street, up to the point opposite Stonehorse Lane (Cliffe Road), formed the boundary line of Strood "within the City." Following the demoralising policy taught by St. Nicholas, Rochester, those inhabitants of Strood dwelling within that favoured line claimed the sole relief of this income, leaving their neighbours on the other side to groan under the old burden unrelieved; and down to 4th August, 1809, the matter was the subject of a strong debate in vestry, as our parish archives of that date testify. Our old Workhouse \* was built from funds provided out of this Charity, and in August, 1822, Strood received the sum of £2,110 3s. 5d., in some (presumably the final) division of funds then made. With about half of this fund the Trustees widened and improved Gun Lane, and several places in the Parish, altered the workhouse, paid off a mortgage of £400 on the "Parish Garden," and the other moiety was paid to Mr. Freeland, the "Stipendiary Overseer," in all probability, to clear outstanding poor law liabilities.

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\* See pp. 261-4 "Old Workhouse."

Of the surplus annual income of the Charity Estates, after providing for the said poor wayfarers above mentioned, Strood Intra was entitled to four thirty-second parts, but by a Decree in Chancery, dated the 14th day of July, 1855, the said surplus is appropriated without assigning any specific portion to Strood

This Charity owns the entire block of property—with the exception of part of the Globe Public House—stretching from the Sun Pier, Chatham, to the Military Road. It is all situated on the North side of the High Street, and extends from, and including, the Reform Club to the foreshore of the river.\* The rental from this property alone is £2,500 per annum.

The Charity is now administered under a scheme passed by the Commissioners in 1886.

Sixteen inmates reside at the picturesque Almshouses on the Maidstone Road. Also two resident nurses and a head nurse. Six occasional nurses are also employed to work among the poor in the City. The six poor travellers, and the baths upon the Esplanade, are maintained by these funds. There is an annual grant of £100 for apprenticeship premiums, and £1,000 per year is paid towards the maintenance of St. Bartholomew's Hospital. Seven shillings per week is granted to six out pensioners, viz :—three men and three women. £200 per annum is granted for Scholarships at the Mathematical and Girls' Grammar Schools.

The total annual income of the Charity is about £4,000. In all these benefactions, Strood takes its share.

#### LORD COBHAM'S CHARITY.

This consists of a right, under an Act of Parliament of the 39th of Queen Elizabeth, to elect and send two persons to Cobham College, there to be maintained by the Charity. This Charity was established by Sir William Brooke, Lord Cobham, in his lifetime.

#### YOUNG'S AND PEMBLE'S CHARITY.

This consists of three (formerly four)† pieces of land in Hoo and Frindsbury, purchased in accordance with the desire of a

\* It is lamentable that the public of Chatham do not, with the exception of the Sun Pier, possess access to a yard of our noble river.

† The missing piece of land mentioned is described as "a piece of woodland called Park Dale, containing one acre, situated in the parish of Strood, adjoining to Newark Wood, towards the East; to Reedfield, to the West; to Stockdale Wood, to the North; to Upfield, towards the South. There is a memorandum of Sir Joseph Williamson, the proprietor of Cobham Hall, paying rent for it in 1698."—*History of Rochester*, 1817, p. 263.

vestry holden on the 7th June, 1629 (Messrs. Anthony Young and Jacob Pemble being Churchwardens), with money given by several persons for the benefit of the poor. The land was let on lease for 21 years from the 29th September, 1861, to John Foord, Esq., at the annual rent of £30. [See also pp. 93, 282-3.]

#### WILLIAM FURNER'S CHARITY.

This is an annuity of £2 per annum, given by a codicil to the will of William Furner, dated the 13th May, 1721, and is charged upon two (formerly three) houses in Cage Lane, in this parish, now belonging to the Devises of the late Edward Smallman, deceased, and occupied by the Widow Sunnocks and Charles Baker. The codicil, which is dated the 26th May, 1722, directs that the annuity shall be applied towards the support of the Charity School and Workhouse, then lately erected and built in the said Parish of Strood, for the maintaining of Poor Children of the said Parish of Strood therein, and for instructing them in the knowledge and practice of the Christian Religion as taught in the Church of England. These premises have been pulled down, and Messrs. Hoar and Son's oil merchants' establishment now occupies the site. The annuity still remains payable by the owner of these premises.

#### SARAH PHILLIPS'S CHARITY.

By the will of Sarah Phillips, dated the 24th June, 1740, the sum of £188 18s. 3d., Old South Sea Annuities, was given to the Minister, Churchwardens, and Overseers of this Parish, in trust, to lay out the dividends thereof in the purchase of bread, to be distributed on the donor's birthday, viz., the 8th November, amongst so many of the most industrious Poor People of the said Parish, not taking alms or relieved by the Parish, as the said Trustees should think fit. After the South Sea Annuities were paid off, viz., on the 22nd March, 1855, this stock was converted into £198 3s. 7d. Consols, producing annually £5 18s. 10d. The original bequest was £50, which became payable to the Parish upon the decease of her nephew WILLIAM PEARSON. The date of the nephew's death was uncertain. On the 24th June, 1778, a Parish Vestry was held, at which it was decided "to employ Mr. George Gates, Attorney at Law, and that he do proceed to recover the sum of £50 with lawful interest for the same, according to the last will and testament of

Sarah Phillips, of Strood, in the County of Kent, widow." It is alleged in this statement that William Pearson "Dy'd on or about the year 1747." No doubt this bequest was recovered at some later date, though no evidence has yet shown when. Evidently, with the accrued "lawful interest," it was invested in South Sea Stock, producing on its realization the sum of £188 18s. 3d.,—therein faring much better than did some investments placed in that historic speculation.

#### THOMAS HULKES'S CHARITY.

Thomas Hulkes, by his will dated the 22nd August, 1805, gave to the Curate of the Church of Strood £83 6s. 8d. Consols, the Dividends thereof to be applied in buying bread for such poor men and women as should be resident parishioners of and belonging to the said Parish, and should not receive any parochial relief; such bread to be distributed on the Sunday before the 22nd of February, immediately after Divine Service, among such poor men and women (who should have attended the service, or could give sufficient reason for their absence) as the said Curate should think fit. Produces annually £2 10s.

#### AN UNKNOWN DONOR.

On the 1st October, 1845, the sum of £133 6s. 8d. £3 per centum Consolidated Bank Annuities was purchased in the names of the Rev. Thomas Deacon, William Henry Sweet, and William Wood; and by a deed dated the same day, those gentlemen declared the trusts of the dividends of the said stock as follows:—"To be applied in each year in four equal parts in the purchase of bread, to be distributed amongst the poor persons belonging to the parish who shall, in the judgment of the said Trustees, be the fittest objects of this Charity, on the first Sunday of the months of January, February, November, and December in each and every year for ever." Produces annually £4.

In 1872, the stocks comprising Sarah Phillips's, Thomas Hulkes's, and an Unknown Donor's Charities, were transferred to the Official Trustees of Charitable Funds.

#### ANN SOPHIA FREELAND'S CHARITY.

Ann Sophia Freeland, by her will dated the 27th day of February, 1875, which was proved on the 1st of June following,



gave to the Minister and Churchwardens for the time being of this parish, the sum of £200 free from legacy duty, to be invested in Consolidated Bank Annuities in their names, the dividends to be distributed half-yearly by such Minister and Churchwardens to the deserving poor of the Parish. This legacy was invested in the purchase of £210 10s. 3d. Consolidated £3 per cent. Annuities, in the names of the Official Trustees of Charitable Funds, and produces £6 6s. 2d. Miss Freeland was a former Schoolmistress of Strood. This school formerly stood on a plot of land opposite the East Gables, between Mr. Illman's and the Forge belonging to Mr. T. Skinner.

#### ANNE MARIA HULKES'S CHARITY.

Anne Maria Hulkes, of Brafield, Upper Norwood, in the County of Surrey, spinster, by her will dated the 7th day of September, 1871, and proved on the 1st day of May, 1872, by Samuel Powell and John Baxter Langley, the executors thereof, gave devised and bequeathed her residuary real and personal estate unto the said Samuel Powell and John Baxter Langley, their heirs, executors, and administrators, upon trust, to receive the rents, issues and profits thereof, and to pay the same after deducting all reasonable charges and expenses unto her brother Henry Stephen Hulkes, for, and during the term of his natural life, and from and after his decease she directed her said Trustees and Executors to sell and dispose of all the rest residue and remainder of her real and personal estate, and thereout to pay (*inter alia*) to the Vicar for the time being of St. Nicholas Church, Strood, in the County of Kent, and the Town Councillors and the Relief Committee, for the time being, of Strood aforesaid, as Trustees for the time being, the sum of three thousand pounds, to be invested by them on some good security, and the interest or income arising therefrom to be applied in the distribution of bread, coals, blankets, or clothing amongst the well-conducted poor of Strood aforesaid (irrespective of religious distinctions) as should at the time of distribution appear most necessary, on the Nineteenth day of March, and the 23rd day of December in each year, unless the same should fall on a Sunday, and in that case on the Monday following.

#### MEMORANDUM.

Mr. Henry Stephen Hulkes was born on the 29th of March, 1812, and baptized at the Church of Saint Margaret, Rochester, in the same year.



## EMILY BULMER'S CHARITY.

By her will dated 17th July, 1888, Mrs. Emily Bulmer, of Peter's Place (The Gables), left the sum of £1,200 to the Vicar and Churchwardens of Strood, the interest of which sum is to be annually distributed at Christmastide to such poor inhabitants of the parish as they shall select.\* Mrs. Bulmer resided at Peter's Place, now the Gables.†

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\* The 52nd George 3rd, chapter 37, section 45, of Local Act provides—That all lands, tenements, hereditaments, estates, sum and sums of money, or other effects coming to the hands of any person or persons to be applied in any particular manner for the use of the poor of this Parish, shall be conveyed, assigned and paid to the Trustees acting under the said Act, and shall be applied and disposed of by the said Trustees in the manner directed by the respective donors, with power to permit the original Trustees appointed by the respective donors to continue in the management of their trust estates respectively.

† See p. 186.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### STROOD WATERWORKS.

THE following epitome of general information concerning the Strood Waterworks will interest the reader.

The original low service reservoir was built in 1849, and had holding capacity for 54,000 gallons; the second low service reservoir, with a like capacity, was built in 1868; in 1893, these two reservoirs were joined together and covered in, bringing the total capacity to 168,000 gallons. The high service reservoir was constructed in 1881, with a total capacity of 200,000 gallons.

A 4 n.h.p. vertical engine, erected in 1849, and a 6 n.h.p. vertical engine, erected in 1858, deliver only into the low service reservoir, and together will deliver about 15,000 gallons per hour. There is also a 10 n.h.p. vertical engine, erected 1868, which will deliver about 15,000 gallons per hour to the low service reservoir. An auxiliary high service pump, driven by the same engine, was erected by Messrs. Collis and Stace, in 1881, the capacity being 3.9 gallons per stroke, and will deliver into the high service reservoir about 7,000 gallons per hour. A 30 n.h.p. beam engine (high pressure condensing), by Messrs. Gunson and Co., of Leicester, was erected in 1883. The capacity of the deep well pump is 27 gallons per stroke, and of the high service pump 12½ gallons per stroke. This engine will deliver to the low service reservoir 32,400 gallons per hour, and at the same time lift 15,000 gallons of the above quantity to the high service reservoir. The 60 n.h.p. horizontal engine (high pressure condensing), was built by Messrs. James Watt and Co., of Birmingham, at the Colne Valley Waterworks, Bushy. This was afterwards altered and fitted with new pumps, &c., by Messrs. Moreland and Son, of London, and re-erected in 1893. The capacity of the deep well pump is 47 gallons per stroke, and the high service pump 28 gallons per stroke. This engine will deliver to the low service reservoir 56,400 gallons per hour, and at the same time lift 33,600 gallons of the above quantity to the high service reservoir. The lift from the well to the low service reservoir is

124ft., and from the low service reservoir to the high service reservoir 184ft.

There are four wells, out of which the engines pump direct, without the intervention of gearing. The two older wells—viz., those under the 4 h.p. and 6 h.p., and the 10 h.p. engines—are 114ft. deep, which is the level of the bottom of the headings ;



FOOT OF STROOD HILL.

*Drawn by R. J. Beale.*

*[From a Photo by A. G. Blackman.]*

the other two wells—viz., those under the beam and horizontal engines—are 132ft. deep, and 7ft. in diameter, the portion of the well below the headings being reduced to 4ft. in diameter, in which is placed the suction pipe of the pumps.

The wells are all connected by means of headings, varying from 3ft. to 10ft. in width, and from 6ft. to 12ft. in height, the total length being 300ft.; the headings cross a "fault" in the chalk, where a heavy slip took place during the process of driving them, necessitating the removal of a large quantity of

chalk, and the building of brick piers in cement, to prevent further slips taking place.

The average daily consumption for 1893 was as follows:— High service, 132,000 gallons, equal to 18 gallons per head per day; low service, 131,000 gallons, equal to 22 gallons per head per day.

The revenue for the year ending March, 1894, amounted to £2,314 12s. 1d.

The total amount of loans was £24,843; amount paid off to March, 1893, £1,339; amount outstanding, £23,504.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### OUR MEN OF MARK.

Learning by study must be won ;  
'Twas ne'er entail'd from son to son :  
Superior worth high rank requires,  
For that mankind revere their sires :  
But if by false ambition led,  
In honour's paths they cease to tread,  
The ancient merits of their race  
Serve but to heighten their disgrace.

Combe: *Tour of Dr. Syntax in Search of Consolation.*

Among the many lives that I have known,  
None I remember more serene and sweet,  
More rounded in itself and more complete  
Than his,

                                  but in this calm retreat  
For him the Teacher's chair became a throne.  
With fond affection memory loves to dwell  
On the old days, when his example made  
A pastime of the toil of tongue and pen.—*Longfellow.*

### To the Memory of Charles Roach Smith.

#### A TRIBUTE.

“ There is  
One great society alone on earth  
The noble living and the noble dead.”—*Wordsworth.*

“ I find already some words of mine have been quoted, viz :—‘ He could not think a mean thing, much less do one.’ It is most true, As a friend he never swerved : he held tenaciously to those whom he had once admitted to friendship, and, as it too often happens, he sometimes had to suffer. His honour and integrity of character could not be exceeded. He was ever generous, ever full of real kindness to those about him.”—*John G. Waller, F.S.A.* Introduction “ Retrospections,” Vol. III.

“ Touch me with noble \* \* \* \* passion ” (Lear)—*Shakespeare.*

Oh, gratitude ! Thou Angel part !  
Thou chiefest good in erring man !  
Wake all the music of my heart  
To pay such homage as it can.  
Oh, touch my lips with noble song !  
And string my harp to strains divine !  
Peal, chords majestic ! sweep along !  
And rightly sing what life was thine !  
Make great the song, thou fitful muse  
Of this high theme, the love of friend ;  
Sing its sweet joys, its grace infuse  
So love be constant to the end.



What is the end ? True, thou dost rest ;  
 Thy earthly form is turned to dust ;  
 But thou shalt live in every breast  
 That e'er was worthy of the trust.  
 Wide was thy love ! Thy door as wide  
 E'er ope'd in welcome to the young ;  
 And now they firmer breast the tide  
 And nobler songs are on their tongue.  
 That which is good is not for death ;  
 That which is true is true for aye ;  
 Though but the trembling of a breath  
 Truth lifts us higher day by day.

\* \* \* \* \*

" Let there be light ! " God's first Command  
 The message darksome chaos heard,  
 E'en so we wait the dawn, and stand  
 And strive to catch His fuller word.  
 We wait, as Israel, Shiloh's birth ;  
 Whilst *present duties lie unseen* ;  
 Our folded arms help keep God's earth,  
 In blood and tears and anguish keen.  
 Were we not blind, and knew but this,  
 " Man saves himself by loving man,"  
 Yet not for self so loves,—I wis  
 Such lives the noblest life he can.  
 Such seems the life, and such the light,  
 The Lowly Nazarene hath taught,  
 CANT makes his sacrifice a sight !  
 And turns His blood and tears to nought.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Thy* faith was deeds,—words did not tell  
 What self-denying life was thine !  
 For others thou " didst all things well,"  
 Bright doth the golden record shine.  
 Another's good ne'er passed thee by  
 But thou didst all a friend could do,  
 Thy nature great, thy honour high,  
 And thou both good and kind and true.  
 Yes ; Charles Roach Smith ; we bow the head  
 In grateful love and thanks to thee,  
 Thou liv'st among us still—tho' dead !  
 Years cannot dim thy Memory.  
 This is the flower that decks thy grave ;  
 The purest, sweetest, that can bloom :  
 " Thou liv'd'st for others"—this shall save  
 From Death, from silence and the tomb.

HENRY SMETHAM.

18th November, 1891.

## CHARLES ROACH SMITH, F.S.A.

Charles Roach Smith was born at Landguard Manor House, near Shanklin, Isle of Wight, August 20th, 1807, and was the youngest son of a family of five sons and four daughters, of whom he was the sole survivor. His father was a gentleman farmer in the Island, where his forbears were freeholders in the



CHARLES ROACH SMITH, F.S.A.

*(By kind permission of Proprietors "Illustrated London News" and Mr. G. O. Howell).*

early Stuart days, while his mother belonged to the Roach family (who were one of the first settlers in the island after the advent of the Conqueror) of Arreton Manor, near Brading. Both parents are interred in Newchurch churchyard.

His first school experiences were at Brading, in an establishment for young ladies. He says "My two elder sisters drove me there, when Morton Common was flooded to the causeway. This transplantation was to me a cruel trial, but I was so concerned about the safety of my sisters on their return through the water,

that I half forgot the clouded prospects of my new life. When I heard of their reaching Landguard alive and well, I accepted my fate among the ladies with less anxiety, and," he rather significantly adds—"this is as much as I can say." He was very fond of fishing, and later, on leaving the ladies' school for Swathling, bright allurements in the shape of fishing facilities were held out to him as additional attractions to go there. He was always fond of singing. His father was a singer before him, and he found himself placed in the Church Choir at Swathling. But—curious paradox—in sacred music he could not achieve much, but of ballad and song he could sing from a store inexhaustible. From this school he went to Saint Cross (following his schoolmaster, who removed) and from thence to Lymington, a larger academy. Here the master, Mr. Withers, of whom he spoke highly, was astounded with his boyhood's elocutionary ability, and on hearing him read from Sterne's *Sensibility*, in *Enfield's Speaker*, he being in the second or third class, at once ordered him to stand at the head of the school. Here, at the local theatre, he first made his acquaintance with the writings of J. R. Planché, destined in after years to become a close and well-known friend. The play was *Amoroso*, which Planché in very early years had written for a private performance. It was re-named by some theatrical pirates, and placed upon the Drury-lane stage, and retrieved the then fallen fortunes of that house, though Planché never received a penny. In the classics, and with Shakespeare, he achieved wonders, but starved mentally on arithmetic. He narrowly escaped being entered as a Cadet in the Royal Marines—in which an elder brother was already placed, and was also in equal peril of the Church. He also avoided the law—another projected profession for him. As an illustration of his conception of life's duties, the following quotation from his *Retrospections* is not without its interest. "In going to and from Lymington, I usually stayed a night at my Uncle Gibbs' at Thorley. There was a whist party one evening, and someone wanted change of a sovereign. My uncle, with latent humour, referred to me; but he and the rest were not a little surprised when I took out my purse and gave the needed change. Money makes money; I was liberally rewarded for my thrift, and assured by the company that they could not have believed that a school boy fresh from school could have sayed so much money. The explanation is that I was liberally supplied with money on

going to school; and although ever ready to spend on worthy objects, I had no taste for the mere self-gratifications which soon swallowed up the contents of the equally well stored purses of my comrades. We have a notion that youth is the season for development of generosity and benevolence, and so, with proper culture it ought to be; but alas! we really find in it a calculating and suspecting spirit and an intense selfishness. Rare is it to see a boy or a young man rush to the aid of suffering merit, or to do a noble or a generous action." These words might be written in letters of gold. Finally it was decided to apprentice him to a chemist at Chichester. Speaking of this at a later period he said, "It was the great trial of my life." A letter from his mother, whom he dearly loved, caused him to make a resolution that she should never again hear a word of complaint from him; and he kept his word, "Every day," he adds, "brought something to assist my resolution." Mr. Follett (his employer) had a copy of *Daniel's Rural Sports*. "To my delight, in this work I found there was a river near Chichester called the Lavant, full of fish. I sent to the Island for my fishing rod; but I could never, except in *Daniel's* book, find the river he described!" Here at Chichester were sown the seeds of his antiquarian studies. At the expiration of his apprenticeship he entered a wholesale drug establishment in London. The hours, as he mentions in his *Retrospections*, were from six in the morning till eight at night. His mother dying at this juncture he determined to enter business as a relief to his mind from the terrible depression which ensued. He did so in Lothbury, at the back of the Bank of England, and when he had fully established himself and was making a good income, his house was required for city improvements, and he was compelled to get out and find a house where he could, owing, as he judged, to an unmerited enmity on the part of a powerful city magnate, who imagined him the writer of some caustic comments in the latter's disfavour which had appeared in the press, which, he afterwards said, he had never seen, much less written. He began the world of business again at Liverpool Street, Bishopsgate. Here it was he formed his Museum of London Antiquities, and began his publication of the *Collectanea Antiqua* (seven volumes), which has gained him lasting antiquarian fame. It is so relied upon as a standard work on the subject that a complete edition is a great rarity in the book market and fetches over £20. His activity was



ceaseless. On foot he traversed the greater part of England, much of France, and other parts of the continent, to follow up his favourite study.

When proposed for the Fellowship of the Society of Antiquaries on December 22nd, 1836, it was objected against him that he was engaged *in trade*! but such were the qualities of the man and the devotion of his friends, that he was elected by one of the largest majorities ever recorded. At the dinner given him, previous to his election, to meet the Noviomagian Society he first met the late Dr. Alfred Smee, who some years back unsuccessfully wooed the suffrages of Rochester in the Conservative interest.

The profundity of Mr. Roach Smith's archæological discoveries and knowledge, and his genial social qualities and high personal character, gained him sincere and highly placed friends, the late Lord Londesborough (Albert Denison), being one whom he ever held in the highest esteem. He was elected to the Royal Society of Literature, and to many other learned home and foreign societies, the late King of Denmark, Frederick VII., himself proposing a new rule for the Danish Antiquarian Society to admit of his election. "He was," says one of the highest of living scientists and writers, "one of the chief representatives of the *science* of archæology as understood in its broadest and widest sense. He has never been a mere collector of remains of ancient archæology, regarded only as curiosities, but has always had in view their use as exponents of the great unwritten history—the history of the people—which is not to be obtained from other sources; his writings have tended to the same end. Hence he stands to-day one of the foremost amongst those few of the present day who understand the science in its best and widest sense, his works being referred to as the authority at home and abroad."

He also founded the British Archæological Association, and its journals give abundant evidence of how much valuable labour he contributed to its cause, and, practically, ensured its success.

In 1855, through failing health, he decided to sell his collection of antiquities and leave London. His great wish was to preserve the collection entire, and for this reason he accepted £2,000 for it from the authorities of the British Museum, whilst



Lord Londesborough (who could not keep it entire) offered him £3,000. Thus his love for his favourite science caused him to lose £1,000, which at the time he much needed. In 1856, through his acquaintance with Mr. Humphrey Wickham, of Strood, and the late Lieutenant Waghorn, then living at Snodland,—to whom we may apply the quotation, “The nation, slowly wise and meanly just, to buried merit raised the tardy bust,”—he purchased Temple Place, Cuxton Road, Strood, and settled there. Here his early love of gardening returned, and he planted and raised great quantities of fruit trees (mostly destroyed by the devastating floods alluded to elsewhere), and the “Strood Prolific Damson”—



OLD GABLED HOUSE, CORNER OF CUXTON ROAD. SITE NOW COVERED BY “GUN” INN.

*Drawn by F. A. Stewart, from a Print in the British Museum.*

named in Smee's *My Garden* “Rochester Prolific”<sup>\*</sup>—were raised and taken in hand by the late Mr. Rivers, the celebrated gardener, over 30,000 young trees in an incredible space of time being exported abroad alone.

Ever a devoted admirer of Shakespeare, Roach Smith studied his works with deep attention, and in 1868, published *The Rural Life of Shakespeare*, which has run through two, if not three editions; also *Remarks on Shakespeare, his Birthplace, &c. The Scarcity of Home Grown Fruits*, in which he advocates

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<sup>\*</sup> Piracy has been busy with the name of this particular fruit, which is now known and grown as the “Farleigh” Prolific. Justice may, a century hence, restore it to its proper name.

the utilisation of the barren railway banks, is another valuable work from his pen.

Among our local population he was chiefly known for his histrionic and elocutionary abilities. He had the rare power of being able to take up a number of voices, and thus carry on, with an accuracy truly wonderful, a dialogue of half a dozen different voices, each distinct in tone and manner from the other. He attached himself to the Strood Institute, and with Mr. W. H. Reynolds, in 1872, founded the Strood Elocution Class, with the history and doings of which most of my readers are familiar. To the large body of young men who thereby came under his influence, his memory will ever be a beloved and honoured one. Rarely does it fall to the lot of one man to win such tribute of love and affection from so many, and rare indeed are those who so truly deserve it. His hospitable doors were ever open to his young friends, and they could always count upon his service, his help, and counsel.

Mr. Roach Smith died at Temple Place, Cuxton Road, on Saturday, August 2nd, 1890, and was buried at Frindsbury on the North side of the entrance to the Church.

The following may be accepted as an accurate list of the different Societies with which he was connected.

Fellow and Corresponding Member of the Society of Antiquarians; Hon. Member of the Numismatical Society, Royal Society of Literature, British Archæological Society; Member of the Antiquarian Societies of London, Middlesex, Kent, Sussex, Norfolk, Suffolk, Surrey, Lancashire, Cheshire, and Newcastle-on-Tyne; Member of the Société Française pour la Conservation des Monuments; Corresponding Member of the Society of Antiquarians of France, Denmark, Normandy, Spain; Member of the Antiquarian Societies of Picardy, Morini, Touraine, Abbeville, Wiesbaden, Mayence, Luxembourg.

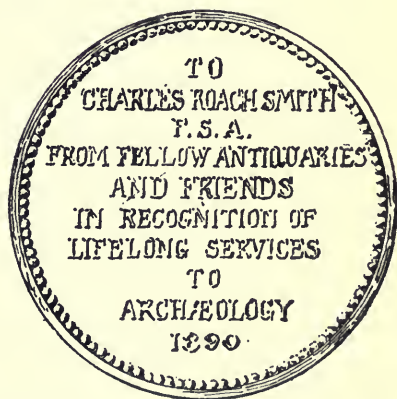
Mr. Roach Smith's best known writings may also thus be classified:—*Collectanea Antiqua*, 7 vols., (1848), subscribers only; *Retrospections, Social and Archæological*, 2 vols. (Vol. III. being completed and published by his executors after his death\*);

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\* \* This volume was edited by his life-long friend, Mr. J. G. Waller. Out of the profits of the volume, the executors, Colonel Joliffe and Mr. G. Robinson, presented Mr. Waller with a silver salver as a memento, and handed the balance, £40 to £50, to the residuary legatees.

*Illustrations of Roman London* (1857); *Catalogue of London Antiquities*; *Remarks on Shakespeare's Birth-place*; *Rural Life of Shakespeare, as illustrated by his Works*; contributed largely to Dr. Smith's *Classical Dictionary*, Halliwell's *Shakespeare*, *The Gentleman's Magazine*, *Transactions of the Archaeological Association*; *Glossary of the Isle of Wight Dialect*; *Antiquities of Richboro', &c.* (1850), with supplementary volumes on Lymne and Pevensey (1852-8); *Scarcity of Home Grown Fruit*; Editor of the *Inventorium Sepulchrale* (1856); Revisor of Stevenson's *Dictionary of Roman Coins* (1886).

The Medal here shown was presented to him—practically on



his death bed—about 48 hours previous to his decease. After his death his estate came to the hammer, Messrs. West Bros., builders, of Strood, purchasing the land. With a foresight and consideration that do them great credit—in a locality where such action is indeed rare—the firm, in laying out the estate, named its streets as follows:—Charles Street, Roach Street, Smith Street, and Antiquary Street.

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#### MR. F. STEWART COBB.

Mr. Frederick Stewart Cobb was born at Strood, where his family have been located for the past century, on December 24th, 1841. He was educated at the Cathedral Grammar School, Rochester, under the late Rev. R. Whiston, was a King's Scholar from 1854-9, going afterwards to Amiens and Belgium, and also to Dusseldorf on the Lower Rhine, where he completed his

scholastic studies. His education accounted in part for his linguistic acquirements, which were unusual, and also for a certain cosmopolitanism and detachment from the prejudices of the average Englishman which characterised him throughout his life.

In 1862 he was nominated to compete for a clerkship in the then recently-formed Savings Bank Department of the Post Office. His commanding talents won him a high place in this examination, and he promptly took his place in the G.P.O., where he remained until 1892, having obtained the rank of a principal clerk on the staff of the Savings Bank in 1885.

Possessed of a virile soul and a personality all his own, he took a prominent part in all movements which had, as their aim, the improvement of the condition of his colleagues, and at the crisis in his department in the year 1890—when several hundred men were suspended because of their resistance to compulsory extra duty—he acted as mediator between the men and the Postmaster-General.

In 1891, he made an application (which he afterwards tried his best to have rescinded), for the British Postmastership at Constantinople, but the authorities held him to his original application, and he left London for his “place of exile,” as he called it, much to his own regret, and to the sorrow and disappointment of his colleagues.

Previous to his leaving England, Mr. Cobb was presented with an address bearing several hundred signatures, a gold watch, and a purse of sovereigns. Hundreds assembled at the St. Paul’s Station to see him take his departure to his new appointment, and to wish him God-speed. The London Press, which had applauded his efforts for the suspended men, gave prominent mention to the heartiness of Mr. Cobb’s send-off, and described the occasion, as no doubt it was, as “a singular demonstration.”

Arrived at Constantinople, Mr. Cobb, with characteristic energy, put his soul into his work, introduced many reforms to the great advantage of the community, and induced the Department to remove the Post Office to better, more central and more commodious premises. Popular almost from the first day of his arrival, he was soon appointed Chairman of the British Institute, and died still holding that position. There is no doubt that he was singularly fitted for the position

he took up, and during the seven years he had been in Constantinople he had endeared himself to his own staff and to the whole of the British residents. The *Levant Herald*, speak-



From a Photo by]

[Môra, Brighton.

THE LATE FREDERICK STEWART COBB.

ing of his lamented demise, said "his loss is a calamity to the colony at large. Mr. Cobb was a Christian gentleman in the truest sense of the word." The *Daily Chronicle* of the 18th February, 1899, spoke of him as "a sensitive spirit." It was most



true. His liberty loving English soul suffered torments as he witnessed the Armenian massacres in Constantinople, and knew what these atrocities were elsewhere. One of the Armenian servants of the Post Office was, in January, 1895, arrested by the Turks as he was passing over the Galata Bridge. There could have been no ignorance on the part of the Turkish authorities in this case, as the man wore a large metal badge denoting his office, and had occupied the same position for ten years and daily trod the same path. But for Mr. Cobb's vigorous action his servant would have been murdered and his letters stolen. The Turkish police on this occasion actually arrested Mr. Cobb—and for this they were brought to book by Sir Philip Currie, the English Ambassador, and an apology was made. During the massacres of August, 1896, two of the Armenian clerks were murdered, another seriously injured, and the Post Office itself besieged. Four of the Armenian employees, sheltered by Mr. Cobb, were ultimately removed by him to a place of safety, under British protection.

His efforts to help the victims and to obtain redress sum up all that one human being so situated could do. These efforts were warmly appreciated in Turkey and in England, and we leave the rest to the Recording Angel.

Other distressing experiences came to him. First, the severe earthquake in 1893, which, to use his own expression, "shook his confidence in mother earth." In 1894, he was seized with a severe attack of typhoid fever, and though he recovered and seemed quite to have got back his old spirit, this illness probably weakened his resisting powers when small-pox attacked him.

At the General Post Office, London, the news of his death was received with keen regret, and the moment the sad intelligence became known, instructions were telegraphed to Constantinople to lay a wreath on his coffin "from his friends, Savings Bank, London."

Mr. Cobb probably contracted the fatal attack in visiting his Chief Clerk, who had previously been seized with, but who afterwards happily recovered, from the same malady. Speaking on this aspect of the late Mr. Cobb's nature, the *Oriental Advertiser* said—"Mr. Cobb may be said to have lain down his life for another." It may be stated that sanitary precautions at

Constantinople are small. Vehicles which take an infectious patient to a hospital return to the ranks and take up the next fare that offers.

Mr. Cobb had never married. He died 16th February, 1899, and his body was buried in the English cemetery, in the presence of the British Consul, two Secretaries of the Embassy, many of his fellow-countrymen, and other friends.

On the committee, formed under the presidency of the Duke of Westminster, K.G., to erect a memorial worthy of Mr. Cobb's name and work, are the Very Rev. Archpriest Baronien, D.D., Professor Agar Beet, D.D., Rt. Hon. James Bryce, M.P., Rev. Canon Malcolm Mc'Coll, D.D., Sir J. W. Whittel, Rt. Hon. Arnold Morley, Mr. F. S. Stevenson, M.P., Mr. Edward Bennett, and many other officers of the Savings Bank Department and branches of the General Post Office.

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HUMPHREY WICKHAM.

[By GEORGE ROBINSON.]

“Manners makyth Man.”

The above motto belonged to the armorial bearings of the subject of this biography, a collateral descendant in the direct line of William of Wykeham, of Winchester fame, and if manners are requisite for manhood, no person who had the honour and pleasure of Mr. Wickham's friendship could gainsay that he had this attribute to perfection. Ever kind and sympathetic to friends, courteous and even lenient to opponents, Mr. Wickham gained respect and esteem by all those who had opportunities of judging his inherent worth. He in early life studied the law as a profession, and in due course settled in Strood to practice. As a lawyer he was skilful and painstaking, and few, if any, could equal him in the art of conveyancing and drawing of wills; and in him his clients always felt that in their legal adviser they had a true friend in whom to repose their confidence and interests. Mr. Wickham may well be termed a myriad-minded man. Besides his professional aptitude, he was clever in painting and character sketches; could carve in perfection with an ordinary pen-knife exquisite wood blocks; was a keen sportsman; and no mean writer of prose and poetry. As an enthusiastic antiquary he gained considerable note, and to him the County of Kent is

indebted for the preservation of many valuable relics of the past. Contributions by him are to be found in the contemporary volumes of the *Archæologia Cantiana*. The pioneer of archæological societies in England, Mr. Roach Smith, always cherished a warm friendship for Mr. Wickham, and the former's *Collectanea Antiqua* and *Social & Archæological Retrospections* amply prove how closely they were together identified in Kentish antiquarian pursuits. Many people are not aware that the Upchurch marshes, where so many fine specimens of the Upchurch ware were found, at one time belonged to Mr. Wickham. This, the site of a Roman pottery, was afterwards sold to an enterprising firm of cement factors, who wished to utilize the clay found there in the manufacture of cement. Thus does history repeat itself! Mr. Wickham was either the discoverer, or closely identified with the discovery, of the Roman cemetery at Strood; and with his assistance Mr. Roach Smith wrote contributions on it to the Society of Antiquaries, the Numismatic Society, and to Vol. I. of the *Collectanea Antiqua*. Strange to say, near to the Roman was also a Saxon cemetery. Many valuable antiquities came into the possession of Mr. Wickham, and some of them are now to be found in the British Museum; whilst some are held by a worthy possessor, Mr. G. M. Arnold, of Gravesend. I have already written of the confidence that could at all times be placed by his clients in Mr. Wickham, and now narrate from the *Retrospections*\* the following incident from his own pen, in his professional career, as follows—given at Mr. Roach Smith's earnest request:—

“ I commenced practice here on the 5th July, 1830. On 17th September, 1830, I received a message requesting my immediate attendance at the “Crispin.” I attended there accordingly, and was introduced by the landlady to her lodger, whom she called Charley Roberts. He had lived in the neighbourhood about twenty years, known by that name. The greater part of that time he had lived as ostler at different houses where coach-horses were stabled. At that time a large number of stage coaches and four passed through Strood. He had been in the Militia, and in the latter part of his time travelled the adjacent country, selling thread, laces, tape, and other small wares (ballads, probably, included); and on Sundays he shaved labourers. When I was introduced to him he was in bed, in a nice clean room. He said, ‘ I am not what I appear to be: I am Lord Coleraine, and I want you to make my will. I have very little to dispose of, having made off with all I could; and have only a reversionary interest in £500 bank stock, on the death of a Mrs. Whyte, who is now

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\* Vol. III., p. 9.

ninety-seven years old.' I asked him what relations he had, and he told me he had a son, who was then serving an apprenticeship under Messrs. Guest, saddlers' ironmongers, at Birmingham, whom he left with his wife, after she had been confined a fortnight only; that she was dead, and that none of her or his family knew what had become of his son. Then I asked him what he wished me to do, and I suggested he should leave all he had in trust for his son; to which he answered that he would first ask me a few questions, and then instruct me. His questions were: First, whether I would consent to be his executor. To this I assented. Next, whether I would see him properly taken care of during what little time he had to live; adding, 'You need not fear doing so, as my landlady, I know, will do that, for she has kept me in comfort during my illness, and has taken as much care of me as if I had been her son.' That, and the third question, would I see him decently buried, being answered in the affirmative, he said, 'Then I will leave all my property to you.' This I strongly objected to, telling him he should leave it as I had suggested—to his son. We had a long argument; and, as he remained obstinate, I told him I would not make his will, and left him. In about an hour afterwards he sent for me again. On my arrival he said I was to do what I thought fit; and he informed me that his name was Charles Parrott Hanger, and that he was the nephew of Colonel Hanger, an intimate friend of the Prince Regent, afterwards George IV. I then prepared his will, bequeathing 19 guineas to myself; £50 to his landlady; and all the rest to his son, Charles Henry Hanger, and in order that I might be able to identify him, he told me that the calf of his leg had been cut through in a hayfield when he was a child. 'He died on the 20th September; and I had his son up to attend the funeral. He expressed great gratitude to me; and said that when he got the money he would reward me substantially. Mrs. Whyte died in 1835; and considerable correspondence took place between me and some gentlemen who endeavoured to obtain the settlement of the business which I, at the request of Charles Henry Hanger, (who stated that if I did not yield to them I should save the money for him twice), persisted in preventing; and eventually, on the 3rd June, 1836, met C. H. Hanger in London by appointment and handed him £1,000 11s. 7d., the balance of what I had received, after paying the legacies of £50; and nineteen guineas, the costs of proving the will, including probate duty and legacy, and then left him, his alleged gratitude having oozed out and evaporated; and I never saw, or heard from him afterwards!"

The foregoing narrative speaks for itself as to the strict ideas of professional duty which at all times were characteristic of the late Mr. Wickham. Lawyers as a rule are in works of fiction both ancient and modern portrayed as selfish, grasping and unscrupulous individuals, whose chief aim in life is to enrich themselves at the expense of their clients, and even on the stage both the tragic and the comic villain is often an impersonator of



a member of the legal profession. Some London papers are not blameless in this matter either. No mock modesty prevents my asking why an honourable calling should be always so travestied and satirized? Rarely, if at all, does any encomium in print fall on a profession which certainly in its ranks boasts to a very large extent of men who are unselfish and diligently scrupulous to protect the interest entrusted to them.

Mr. Wickham had a keen sense of humour. Who could help smiling at the smart pen and ink sketch of the Dean and Chapter doing penance which illustrates his copy of the report of the well known action at law of Mr. Roach Smith, whereby the Dean and Chapter were made to give up land they had improperly enclosed. In it you see the Dean and Canons in full ecclesiastical vestments struggling with spades to dig up the fence, whilst a stalwart cleric is staggering under the weight of the gate which had just been removed. Let me say in passing here that I feel quite assured that the present governing authority of our Cathedral would not give occasion for such an action. The writer too well remembers a mournful and despondent farmer asking Mr. Wickham if he could in any way account for the potato disease which was then prevalent in the district. With a merry look at his questioner Mr. Wickham, after a moment's hesitation, blandly said — "Yes, no doubt it is caused by the *rot-tatery* motion of the earth." I could give many other similar instances of the good-humoured fun and jokes of my dear old friend, but space will not permit. Mr. Wickham had one pupil, of whose success in his professional career he was justly proud—I allude to Mr. John Townshend, who years since sought his fortunes in America and is standing legal adviser to the *New York Herald*, and certainly one of the, if not the, most prominent and successful lawyers in the United States. I have before me whilst writing a massive volume on the law of *Slander and Libel* by Mr. Townshend, which was sent to Mr. Wickham in 1890 inscribed "From the author to his venerated friend and preceptor." Mr. Wickham held many public offices at various times. Among them were the clerkships to Watts's Charity Trustees, Hoo Union, Strood Parish Trustees, Strood Burial Board, and Deputy Coroner for the County. The office of Clerk to the Trustees was held by him for a period of 50 years. In December, 1887, Mr. Wickham, after being in practice



for 60 years, retired from the profession which he so long had been honourably connected with, retiring into private life at his fine old residence, adjoining the Post Office, in the High Street of Strood. During the quietude of a Sabbath afternoon (10th September, 1893), he passed peacefully away to a well-earned rest, leaving the memory of a useful life well spent, and an honourable profession honoured.

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MR. R. J. BEAL.

This gifted young artist, whose untimely and deeply-deplored death occurred on Friday, April 9th, 1897, was buried at Frindsbury churchyard on Tuesday, April 13th, at the early age of 20 years. The son of Phemie Beal and the late James Beal, he was born at New Brompton, educated at the Mathematical School, Rochester, and received his art teaching at the hands of Mr. George Ward, Head Art Master, at the City of Rochester Technical Institute. He was appointed a pupil teacher at Maidstone at the age of seventeen, and at nineteen, assistant teacher at the Rochester Technical Schools, where he did good work. He won a National Bronze Medal with a series of well-executed and spirited drawings of Rochester Cathedral and the celebrated pulpit of St. Helen's Church, Cliffe. These drawings appeared in the *Building News* in its issue of November 1st, 1895.

He also entered for a National Silver Medal, and won it—although the intelligence of his success, it is peculiarly sad to state, did not come to hand until after his decease. For the subject for this latter effort he chose the beautiful Brooke Tomb in Cobham Church, Kent, and the work he accomplished can best be judged as to its high merits by consulting the *Building News* of August 12th, 1898, where the beautiful series are excellently shown.

That journal in its editorial of that date, says "This sheet of admirable drawings of this exquisite specimen of the English Renaissance has been reproduced from the originals, for which the late Mr. Reginald J. Beal, of Rochester, was awarded a National Silver Medal. Of the tomb itself, little need be said here. . . . Mr. Beal's measured details are most carefully delineated, and besides furnishing a useful record of a grand

piece of work, show how excellent a draughtsman Mr. Beal really was."

Of the valued work Mr. Beal ever willingly and gratuitously executed for this publication, the volume bears its own evidence. Verbal acknowledgment the writer was, happily, able to make to him in person; but it is, and ever will remain a sad thought, that the grave had closed over this helpful and talented worker, and he had passed into the great land of shadows, before this acknowledgment appeared in this place and form. Had he lived, its tone and character would have been happily different, but its appreciation no less in its vigour and thanks.

## ADDENDA.

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### STROOD CHURCH.

On Saturday, 17th December, 1898, a disastrous fire broke out under the floor of the tower. For a considerable time it appeared that the entire structure was doomed, but, fortunately the efforts of the Rochester Volunteer Fire Brigade—who worked with great discretion and unflagging zeal—were successful in keeping its ravages confined to the tower, but the whole of its interior fittings were entirely destroyed. The ringing platform went first, then the clock, and finally the bells, which came down with a heavy crash, and broke to pieces among the débris. Happily, the tower itself, beyond some scaling off suffered by the stonework, was but little the worse structurally—a fact giving much satisfaction, seeing that the tower is the only part of the ancient building left after the vandalism of 1812. The particularly ugly “meat-safe” arrangement that did duty for the upper part of the tower since the above-noted date (see page 76) perished completely, to the regret of no one. The liberal settlement by the insurance offices concerned, *i.e.*, the “Imperial” and the “Yorkshire,” brought forth the sum of £1,780, with such other sums as the sale of the bells, &c., might realise.

A joint Committee for Restoration was appointed, consisting of the Rev. W. J. Tait, M.A., Vicar; Messrs. Robert Miskin and Charles A. Woollett, Churchwardens; together with Messrs. Robert Powell, Charles D. Levy, William Edmonds, George West, and Henry Smetham, representing the Trustees and Burial Board; with Mr. George Robinson as Clerk and Solicitor. Messrs. Ruck and Smith, architects, of Maidstone, were engaged to submit plans and specifications, which were approved, and the contracts for the work were secured—the restoration of the tower by Messrs. Pryer & Co., Maidstone, and the painting and decorating by Mr. J. S. Hitch, of Strood. It was decided, after a visit of inspection to Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Square, London, by the following members, appointed as a sub-committee: *viz.*, The Vicar, Messrs.

Woollett, Edmonds, G. Robinson, and the Architect—Mr. A. W. Smith, and after their favourable report upon the same, to have ten tubular bells, completely fitted with chiming apparatus, erected in the tower, in lieu of the three cracked bells lost in the fire. Also that a new clock, with two transparent dials—facing South and West—for night illumination, and fitted with Cambridge chiming apparatus, should be secured for the use of the Parish. The bells were contracted for by Messrs. Harrington, Latham & Co., of Coventry, for the sum of

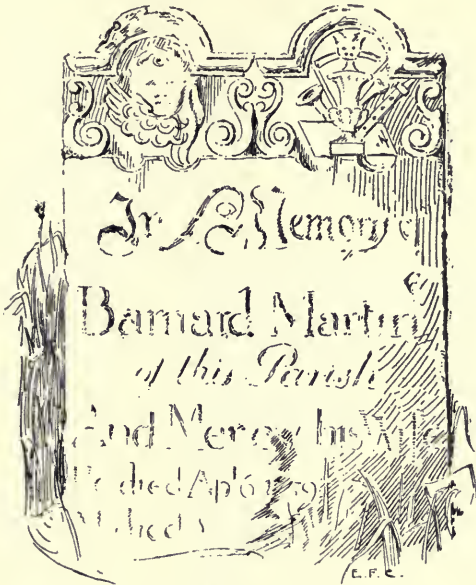


STROOD CHURCH—AFTER RESTORATION.

*Ruck and Smith, Architects, Maidstone.*

£291; and the clock by Messrs. John Smith & Sons, of Derby, for the sum of £135. At the moment of going to press the work is well in hand, and the illustration here given (kindly drawn for the writer by Mr. A. W. Smith), eloquently indicates the improvement effected upon the old lines. Owing to lack of funds, the buttresses shown in the sketch were struck out of the contract. Some benevolent parishioner may probably add them at a future time. On reference to page 51, the reader will observe that the old buttresses were in *situ* when the original of that sketch was made.

Strood Churchyard possesses some quaint and curious tombstones dating from the last century. Among them the three following have been chosen for illustration :—

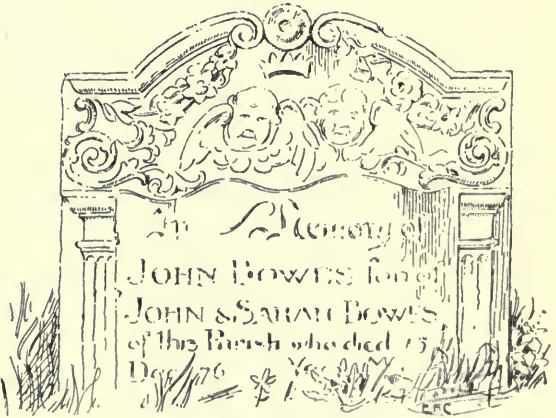


*Drawn by E. F. Cobb.*

BARNARD MARTIN\* has left his mark in our parochial records; he died, as his last monument to posterity here shows, on April 6th, 1759.

JOHN BOWES† is also not without mention, and a copy of his will, with the opinion of counsel upon the same, exists with the

deeds (in the possession of Mr. George Stevens, the owner of the property) relating to the house and shop (Messrs. Smetham and Tutt), No. 97, High Street. John Bowes is therein described as a stonemason, and the foliated ornaments upon his tombstone, with the well-executed columns at the side, give indication, presuming it to be his own work, of unusual skill. He left four messuages in Sittingbourne, a "freehold house, garden, and appurtenances, with one field across the highway towards the North, containing in the whole one acre one yard, . . . . .



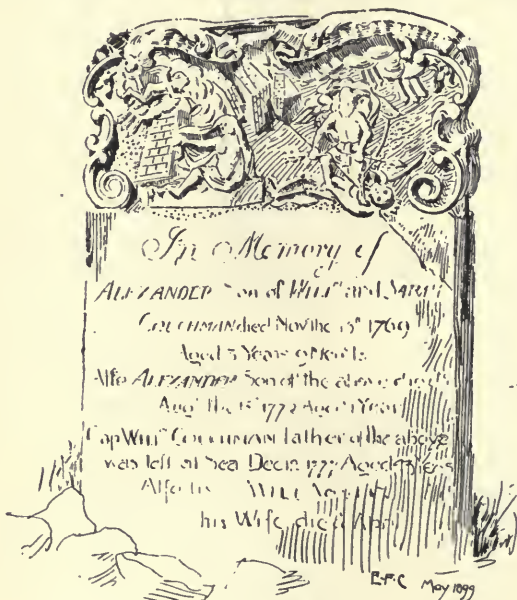
*Drawn by E. F. Cobb.*

\* See pp. 118, 276, and 282.

† See p. 118.



situate . . . Bill Street, in the parish of Frindsbury, in the occupation of Benjamin Savill." Also "my freehold house, with its appurtenances standing, situate opposite the sign of the 'Angel,' in the High Street or Town of Strood . . . now in the occupation of Peter Barton, shopkeeper." The will was proved 2nd May, 1782. All the above property was left to his wife for life, then to pass to his only child, "Sarah Bowes" and her issue. Failing such issue, it was to be equally divided betwixt his own and his wife's next of kin. The daughter died



Drawn by E. F. Cobb.

21st September, 1794, unmarried, at the age of twenty-four years, her mother dying 19th February, 1798, neither leaving a will. In this case a legal difficulty arose, and Mr. John Gibbs, as solicitor, obtained counsel's opinion, which, shortly put, was that the next of kin of Mr. John Bowes inherited the lands, and the next of kin of his widow inherited such moneys as were invested in South Sea Stock and other securities. Had the son lived, whose demise this stone records, matters would have been differently arranged.

"WILLIAM COUCHMAN"\* appears in our parochial assessments in the year 1764. The design of this headstone typifies the

\* See p. 120.

day of resurrection, the dart of death is broken, the skeleton gives place to the re-imbodied spirit, and the works of man — seen by the falling tower—are tumbling to pieces.

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LOCAL FIELDS: PLACE NAMES,

*Taken from the Tithe Map of Strood (purchased for £20,  
15th June, 1843).*

Little Murrells Field, 77 acres; Great Murrells Field, 79 acres; Salts, 81 acres; Giant's Grave, 82 acres; Wickham.

Hoppitts,\* Homestall, Chase, Well Field.

Race Fields, 26 acres.

Barn Field, Great Barn Field, Sand Hole Field, Harp Meadow, Sloggard's and Draper's Wood, Broad Oak, Raven's Nest Wood, Gibbs' Elm Wood, Clay Pond Wood, Magpie Shaw, Head Barn Wood, Hangman's Shaw,† Longways, The Slips, Spring Pond Field, Little Temple Field, Long Bottom Field, Pain Field, Little Brackley Field, Snap Hill Field, Upper Broome Field, Thirty Acres, Middle Broom High Field, Bushy Gate Field, Wall and Half Mill Fleet Pond Meadow, Ingres Field, Little Pankhurst Field, Town Meadow.

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\* Hoppitt is a word yet in use in Essex to denote a meadow or paddock.

† Hangman's Wood probably marks the place of execution of the old Manorial Court, or the property by the tenure of which the executioner held his office. The name, like the cognate name of Gallows Hill, is not uncommon. Gallows Field, &c. Castle Hill and Court Hill signify not only where a court of justice was held, but the place of execution adjacent. At Penwortham there is a tradition that a century and a half ago, a criminal condemned by the Court of the Earl of Chester was executed in Hangman's Field. *Proceedings of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, Vol. ix., pp. 61-70.—There is a Hanging Wood at Charlton, which seems to have been the place of execution of the Manor; the boundary between Woolwich and Charlton passes through it. Pound Park includes the site of the village pound, and the stocks stood outside the church and the border. Vincent: *Records of Woolwich*, pp. 21, 701-2.—The Manor of Charlton was granted in 1093 to the Monastery of St. Saviour, Bermondsey, and in 23 Henry III. the prior was summoned to show his warrant for erecting gallows in Charlton, where gallows never stood previously, when a charter of Henry II. was produced, and the claim allowed. Drake: *Hundred of Blackheath*, p. 119.—There is a Hangman's Wood, near Grays, in Essex. *Ibid.*, p. 196.—At Ruthven, a small eminence is called the Gallows Hill, and a small field adjoining is known as "The Hangman's Acres." *Statistical Account of Scotland*, Vol. xi., p. 413.—In Aberdeenshire, near the village of Gallow Hill, is a field in which is a well, traditionally said to be used by the executioner for washing his hands, which goes by the name of the "Hangie's Well." *Ibid.*, Vol. x., p. 1170.—In various parts of England tales are told by the neighbours to account for Hangman's Hills, &c., such as a sheep stealer getting over a style being throttled by the legs of the dead sheep which hung round his neck. Near Birdwell, on the high road from Barnsley to Sheffield, is a marble pillar, called "The Hangman's Pillar." *Notes and Queries*, 8th S., Vol. VIII., p. 171.

## ACTS OF PARLIAMENT RELATING TO STROOD.

8 and 9 George III., c. 32—For Paving, Lighting, &c.

22 George III., c. 27—For the more easy and speedy Recovery of Small Debts (including Strood).

52 George III., c. 37—For Local Government, Enlarging or Providing New Workhouse, and Re-building Parish Church.

58 George III., (1818)—For Effecting the Sale of Settled Freehold Estates of Thomas Leech the Elder, Esq. (Private Act).

6 George IV., c. 136—Lighting with Gas.

Peter Bucke\* was the builder and owner of Eastgate House. His coat-of-arms is worked in the design of the carved ceiling in the principal room of that house.

## A DICKENS MEMENTO.

"Messrs. Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge commenced yesterday a two days' sale of decorative pottery, &c. The most interesting item in the sale was an old sundial and stone column, formerly the property of Charles Dickens. . . . The object is mentioned by the Novelist in his 'Letters,' p. 95. . . . This memento realised £50 10s."—*Times*, 23rd December, 1898.

This stone column was one of the balusters from Rochester (old) Bridge, and was presented to Dickens by the late Mr. J. H. Ball.

\* See p. 98.

## APPENDIX.

## PREFACE.

IN writing the following pages for my esteemed friend, I do not make any claim for geological merit—they are not written for the student of geology, but simply to bring before and impress the readers with the works of Nature as revealed in this neighbourhood; and if, thereby, a living and intelligent interest is aroused in the lanes, fields, and hillsides of our valley, the objects of this Paper will have been realised.

My best thanks are due to Mr. G. West, for additional information respecting Excavations; Mr. C. Bird, B.A., F.G.S., as regards the Dene Holes; Mr. W. H. Ball, respecting the Strood Waterworks; Mr. W. H. Shrubsole, F.G.S. (now my neighbour), for information respecting Sheppey (he having devoted, as a resident, many years of study and successful research in that locality); and, lastly, to my valued friend and neighbour, Sir George Grove, D.C.L., LL.D., for having kindly perused these papers from an outsider's point of view.



# GEOLOGICAL SKETCH OF STROOD AND ITS ENVIRONS.

BY

G. E. DIBLEY, F.G.S.

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SHOULD a visitor to our ancient city make his first acquaintance with this neighbourhood by road, he will at once realise the beauty of the district and the unique character of its scenery. For this purpose we know no better approach to this charming part of Kent than by the London Road. Very shortly after passing the residence of our illustrious countryman, the late Charles Dickens, a panorama of great beauty is presented to the tourist, in fact it would be difficult to find a similar view in the South of England.

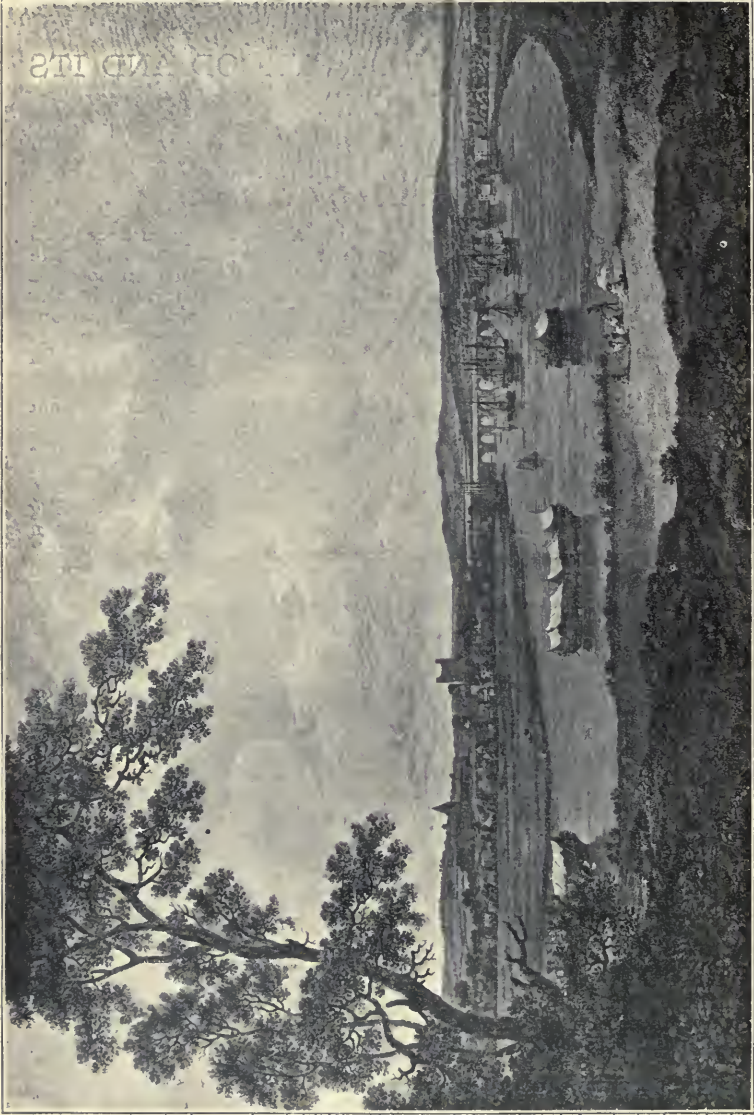
For the purpose of which this sketch is written, we will imagine that we meet our visitor on the London Road at the point where it intersects the Cobham and Hoo Roads, and take the turning to Broom Hill. On mounting this slope his admiration will be increased fourfold at the magnificent expanse on all sides. In front and immediately below lies the urban district of Strood with its ugly church and still more ugly tower\* forming a conspicuous feature, and looking more like part of a brewery than an ecclesiastical edifice. Between this and the ancient historical and highly interesting city of Rochester, with its venerable Norman keep and small but interesting cathedral, rolls the noble Medway, coming from the Weald, cutting its channel through the North Downs and sweeping round to the East past Chatham, then taking a North-Easterly course to the North Sea, forming a splendid estuary and delta after passing Chatham Dockyard. On each side of the river we see the characteristic undulation of the chalk downs, especially between Borstal and Burham on the right bank and Cuxton and Snodland on the left, while behind us "Father Thames" wends his way to the Nore, past the flats on either side flanked by the outcrop of the chalk on the Essex side, and the ridge of chalk between Gravesend and our point of inspection. To the North-East it disappears for a while, being hidden by a low elevation of the chalk at Cliffe (the chalk here evidently having been cut through by the Thames in former times and formed a cliff, which to our mind has given rise to the name) and the wooded heights of Chattenden—so dear to entomologists—stretching by Four Elms Hill to Upnor. Immediately beyond we see its waters mingling with those of the Medway at Sheerness.

If we look in front of us, about a mile to the North-East, we see the picturesque church of All Saints, Frindsbury, standing on a short spur of the chalk which causes the Medway to sweep round under Rochester to Chatham. For the sake of a more detailed inspection, though the view is somewhat limited as regards the Thames Valley, we will proceed by a gentle descent to this point. After passing through a beautiful avenue of limes, from which the best view of the city of Rochester is obtained, we reach the churchyard, Frindsbury.

This church is well worthy of a visit from an archaeological point of view, having been well restored under the present Vicar to a condition worthy of its position and a credit to the parishioners. The restoration of the

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\* See page 76, also appendix.



*From an Old Print]*

NORTH VIEW, CITY OF ROCHESTER, 1790.

*[Drawn by Josl. Farington, R.A.]*

Norman windows, with the new North aisle and the restored South aisle, have completely transformed this ancient landmark. We have often thought "What would the old residents, who now sleep beneath the turf, say, if they could once more walk round and view the exterior and interior of the church of their fathers?"

A great deal might be pointed out to our friend respecting this interesting church, but we must not linger. We walk through the churchyard and find a seat immediately at the summit of a steep path leading from busy Strood just below us; here we rest awhile in contemplation of the prospect.

"What a charming view," our friend exclaims, and well he may, for it would take many pages to do justice to the various points of interest which abound on all sides; the lovely country lying to the South, the busy growing place below us, the ancient city in front, the shipping in the river, and the naval and military establishments at Chatham, but time must not be spent on this now. We walk a few yards to the East, and we find ourselves on the verge of a deep chalk pit, which now extends for a



FRINDSBURY CHURCH.

*From a Photo by A. G. Blackman.*

considerable distance Eastwards, with numerous cement factories along its base. Owing to the enormous amount of chalk excavated during the past thirty years, the appearance of this spot has been completely changed, though by no means pleasantly so.

We will keep a sharp look out on this field, or rather that part which is left, for the flints which are lying about so plentifully, as we may be rewarded by meeting with some that are different in form, and bear peculiar marks as though they have had pieces struck from them.

"I do not see any difference except as you say, in their somewhat irregular shape," says our friend. We will take this flint and with it strike a smart blow on another ordinary small flint. You observe the peculiar manner in which it has fractured; you can strike off several flakes and each will exhibit this special mode of fracture. Now if you will carefully examine this one, which was found on this spot some years ago, you will see that it has been artificially wrought, to bring it to its present shape. This, then, is not the work of Nature, but human workmanship. Such are the famous pre-historic flints which were the work of our very



remote ancestors. Several very fine specimens have been obtained from the Medway valley. We have seen some excellent ones from the valley gravels at Halling, we also remember having seen some beautifully worked flints in the late Mr. Humphrey Wickham's collection. You can now realise that our Medway valley was peopled by a very primitive race of men, using stone (flints) as weapons and tools. Imagine this hardy race inhabiting the banks of our streams throughout the country, and sometimes dwelling in caves, where such afforded shelter. What a different scene they looked down upon, from that which is now spread before us. Still the same chalk hills, wooded heights, the same Medway, though its course then would not be exactly coincident with its present channel. At that time it must have flowed round the foot of Strood hill, by St. Mary's Church, to the mouth of the S.E.R. tunnel, as is proved by the builders in their excavations. The Strood "Marsh" upon which the Board School is built, must be remembered by many. We well remember catching shrimps in the broad ditches when we made our first acquaintance with the neighbourhood.

We should like to linger with the early inhabitants, but in this brief sketch allusion only can be made to their work. Suffice it to say that owing to the large number of worked flints—as we term these—the position which they occupy on the chalk downs and in the valleys, and the character of the work on them as exhibited in the various implements, we know that the latter are the product of two races of men, viz., an earlier whose workmanship was of a very crude nature, and a later race whose implements bear marks of greater skill than those of their predecessors, and these races are termed by Sir John Lubbock the Palæolithic (early stone) and Neolithic (or later stone) men.

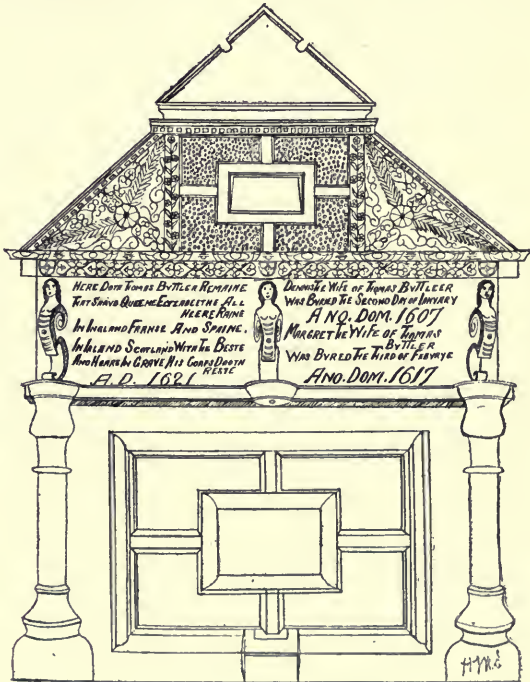
It was only last year that the skull and some bones, of what is now believed to be one of these early men, were described, having been discovered eight years ago in the gravels capping the chalk at Galley Hill, Northfleet, where also, as at Swanscombe, enormous numbers of flint implements have been found and others are still to be met with. We feel that we are going back into what, at one time, would have been described as the "unknown past." One thing has been proved—man has been resident on this earth for many thousands of years, and contemporaneously with him animals that are no longer resident in this country, and others that are now wholly extinct. Among these may be mentioned the wolf, badger, beaver, Irish elk, cave bear, cave lion, hyæna, rhinoceros, mammoth and other species now living in other parts of the world.

Having introduced our readers briefly to the gravels, we will now look up the Medway to the south. On the right of us, and about half a mile above the bridge, we see a brickfield, and with the aid of a glass we discern a fine Elizabethan house, known as Temple Manor House. If we pay this part of the valley a visit, we find that the chalk here is covered by a rich clay loam, and known geologically as "Brick Earth." In this locality it is not at all uncommon to find teeth and bones of the mammoth, remains of which have been found in abundance also in the districts of Northfleet and Aylesford. The houses along the Cuxton road have their foundations excavated from this brick earth.

We are naturally led to ask, "Where did this material come from?" It is part of the remains of beds which once covered the chalk over a large area during submergence, became broken up, after re-elevation, and the débris thus formed has been deposited on the slopes and in the hollows of the chalk along the valley. Our friend enquires "What beds covered the chalk, and what process of disintegration has produced these beds of brick earth?" We will answer this by taking a walk Eastwards as far as the Upnor sand pits. As we proceed we observe a thick coating of gravel and sand, resting on the chalk, on our right, as exposed in a newly-made cutting to be found there.

Having at length arrived at Upnor, we enter the pits close by the river. We find a good face, or section of sand, exposed. This sand is known to geologists as Thanet sands, owing to their greatest development being

found in the Isle of Thanet and the neighbourhood. These beds vary in their composition, some consist of clay and loams and are of marine origin; they thin out considerably in West Kent, and are not met with West of Leatherhead in Surrey; a line drawn from here, North-east through Hampstead and Enfield to Sudbury in Suffolk, marks their Western limit. To the East they are of considerable thickness, re-appearing in Belgium. Fossils are not so common in these beds as they are in the beds above or in the chalk beneath, owing to their pervious nature, for the rainwater, in percolating through these beds, has dissolved all traces of shells of the buried molluscs and other soft bodied animals. In this pit blocks with a large number of impressions of the valves of these animals have been seen, which fall to pieces at the slightest touch. The sand here is about 30ft. in thick-



OLD TOMB (BUTLER'S).

SOUTH-WEST CORNER, FRINDSBURY CHURCH.

ness, while at Canterbury and Herne Bay it is nearly 100ft. These sands are to be seen in many parts of the neighbourhood, they are met with again in the cutting at the top of Strood Hill, and on either side of Gad's Hill; and they rest in masses immediately upon the chalk. If we examine the base, we shall find a large number of green coated flints, at the junction of the sands and chalk, some are rounded by water action and the consequent rolling, the colour is due to a deposition of a compound of iron.

These green flints are always met with at this horizon whenever these sands rest on the chalk; also when the Thanet sands are absent, they are met with where the bed immediately above overlaps and rests on the chalk.

These sands are used in this neighbourhood and at Charlton, near Woolwich, for foundry purposes. The beds we have just described mark a very distinct boundary in geological history between one epoch and another



The beds of chalk and other layers (or members) beneath in downward succession constitute the Secondary or Mesozoic (middle-life) period ; while these Thanet sands usher in a later period known as the Tertiary.

A great lapse of time occurred between the submergence of the chalk and the deposition of these sandy beds ; forms of life met with in the chalk seas had become extinct, while many new genera of large mammalia appeared, together with birds and reptiles. As the existing forms of species of animal and vegetable life made their appearance at this period, the term Eocene ("dawn") has been applied to it. It is estimated from astronomical calculation that this period commenced 2,500,000 years ago.

If we now look towards the top of the pit, and if we clamber up, we shall find that the bed above is of an altogether different texture, being of a clayey nature, in places crowded with fossils, especially a bivalve mollusc which now inhabits the waters of Western Africa, while other parts consist of sandy and pebbly beds ; these beds constitute the Woolwich and Reading beds from their being most typically developed in these localities ; they are about 50ft. thick at Upnor, while in the Isle of Wight they attain a thickness of 163ft. An examination of the fossils indicates that they belong mainly to marine forms of life, while at Woolwich they are more particularly of an estuarine character.

If we use our pick hammer just above the place at which these beds come into contact with the Thanet Sands, we shall meet with an oyster band, from which very perfect specimens may be obtained.

This brings to my mind a very amusing incident, exposing the simplicity of a rustic in Berkshire. Some seven or eight years ago, in cutting the railway from Newbury to Lambourne, the navvies cut through this oyster bed just outside the town of Newbury, and several fine specimens were exhumed. A villager on hearing of the discovery of oysters, happening to drop in at the village public where the navvies lodged, was offered one of these "natives" for fourpence, he purchased the article and left ; however, it was not long before he returned irate at not finding the succulent bivalve inside the shell, and demanded back his money.

Before leaving these Woolwich and Reading beds, I wish you particularly to observe the pebbles. You see that they are rolled flints. Where did they come from ? We will solve this problem during another part of our ramble.

We will proceed Eastward by the "Jolly Sailor," pass the cement factory, and enter the clay pits. This clay is of a brown colour near the surface, but at a depth of about twenty feet it becomes bluish, the brown colour being due to oxidation and the infiltration of rain water containing air. This clay is a very important member of the Eocene period, and was named by William Smith, the father of English geology, London clay, as it covers so large an area in the London district, London itself being built upon it.

London clay covers the greater portion of Essex, where it is 500ft. thick, and re-appears in Sheppey. Under London it is 400ft. thick. The Crystal Palace is built on this clay. It also appears in Hampshire ; it is there separated by a fold in the chalk, and the two areas are respectively known as the London and Hampshire basins. It re-appears in the Isle of Wight, where it is flanked by the chalk. This London clay beyond Reading rapidly thins out and disappears at Hungerford, in Berkshire. We might mention that the character of this bed is not always the same, for in the Hampshire basin and the Isle of Wight it is more or less sandy.

How comes this change in the nature of the sediment ? Supposing we pay a visit to some large lake in a mountainous district, Geneva for instance, where the Rhone enters the lake. We shall find the coarser sediment, brought down by the stream, deposited at the very entrance, while the finer matter being held in suspension by the water, will be carried considerably further before it finally settles. We can therefore assume that the rivers which brought down this material for the formation of the London clay, came from the South-west.

In order to get some important information as to the life and climate of this country, at the time when a large portion of England, France, and

Belgium, were beneath the sea in which the London clay was laid down, we will take the steamer from Upnor to Sheerness.

We observe on our right the large extension of H.M. Dockyard, which has been made and docks excavated from material that has been brought down by the river, and which contains remains of animals, plants, and molluscs, buried and preserved just as those in the older beds around and beneath us.

We also notice the islands forming a delta. The scenery has completely changed. We wish to draw your attention, while on the steamer, to one or two important points in connection with the surrounding strata. First look Westward towards Rochester and Chatham. There you see the horizon bounded by the outline of the chalk hills. As we left Frindsbury, we came upon the Thanet sands, at Upnor we found these overlaid by the Woolwich and Reading beds, and these in their turn by the London clay, all sloping or dipping to the North-East; here, now, on either side, we find this London clay covered with recent alluvial, or river deposit, through which the river in its turn has cut various channels. We are now well within sight of the Isle of Sheppey, whose ridge crowned by the famous Minster Church forms a pleasant relief to the landscape.

On landing at Sheerness, we make our way through a by no means inviting street, to the beach. We proceed leisurely Eastward towards Minster, keeping our eyes well open as we trudge slowly along the shingle, with the clay-cliffs in front of us; flints, flint pebbles, and sand are plentiful.

"What is this?" asks our friend, who is becoming very observant, "A shark's tooth, I declare!" He is quite right, and in the course of our invigorating walk we find that, not only teeth, but the backbones of fish are common, and those of turtles and even snakes are sometimes picked up, also remains of crabs, lobsters, and fish, nearly all of them in hardened masses of clay, which has been rendered so by the action of the sea and exposure to the air. At the base of the cliff we see many rounded masses (with transverse markings), of a very hard nature. These are septarium nodules, and were once used by the Romans in the manufacture of cement; they are still collected for that purpose, though not so much as formerly, and the name "Roman cement" is given to the cement thus produced. We give one of the smaller ones a smart blow, which reveals the character of its interior; the whitish veins we now see consist generally of crystals of carbonate of lime, and the darker portion of a very hard clay and lime. The nodules often contain fossils which are sometimes beautifully preserved, though not usually so, as most of the fossils are pyritised, i.e., the shells or bony part of their bodies have been dissolved and replaced by sulphide of iron (the same material in this locality as that of which the "thunderbolts" of the chalk are composed). In this state it is very difficult to preserve them, as the oxygen of the atmosphere soon causes them to crumble; they can be partially preserved by boiling in paraffin wax, or by electroplating. If we repeat our visit to Sheerness, we shall considerably add to our "finds" in the matter of fossils. We may meet with, in addition to the foregoing, a large quantity of mineralised wood (pyritised), also wood in clay, much hardened and bored by a worm-like mollusc, called *Teredo*, as well as a large number of other mollusca, corals, nautili, sea urchins (echinoderms), and microscopic forms of life. Among the reptiles, remains of a sea snake, crocodiles, and turtles are met with. Several species of fish, principally sharks, have been described. Five species of birds, and two of mammals, have been found at Sheppey. Fossil fruits of a tropical palm, leaves of palms much resembling those of living species; no less than forty species of plants, chiefly *mimosa* and *acacia* (of the N.O. Leguminosæ), fruit-cones of the alder are also met with.

Now what do we learn from these highly interesting forms of life, that once belonged to Sheppey and Upnor, in ages long long past? Firstly, that the majority of the molluscan remains, as well as the echinoderms and fish, are marine; secondly, that the presence of crocodiles, turtles and plant remains, indicate the proximity of some large river and a land area; thirdly, the character of these animals and plants, which are now only

met with in tropical and subtropical regions, prove beyond doubt that the climate of this period was very different from that of the present.

Before returning to Rochester, our minds emerge from the past and we look at what is taking place now. We observe the rough outline of the cliffs here Eastwards to Herne Bay, where we discern beyond the town the ancient towers of Reculvers, now prevented from being swallowed up by the sea by solid walls of masonry; still farther Eastward, we see the chalk again appearing from beneath the sea, and forming the cliffs of Margate and the North Foreland, towering in white masses round to Folkestone, and again at Eastbourne to Beachy Head.

We wish you particularly to notice the action of the sea on these soft clay cliffs of Sheppey, and how it acts as a circular saw, moving in a horizontal plane, undermining the cliffs, being assisted by the sun, wind, rain, springs and frost, thus causing large masses, often weighing several tons, to fall on the beach below. These are broken up, and the fine clay particles are carried away by the currents, and in this way form a new surface on the sea bottom.

The amount of erosion—wearing away by the agents before described—of these cliffs is considerable; a strip of land more than a yard in width is carried away annually by the sea, and it is on record that as much as four acres of land have disappeared at one time.

We will return to Sheerness via Minster. On reaching the summit of the cliff and walking a short distance along the ridge, we find the clay in places capped by sand.

This is another important member, designated "Bagshot Sand," and is so named from Bagshot Heath in Berkshire, where it is well developed. This sand, which here, and in North London, forms outlying isolated patches capping the hills of Highgate, Harrow and Hampstead, is known as the "Lower Bagshot." It is well seen again along the Hampshire coast, and in the Isle of Wight. Altogether these beds attain a thickness of 1500 ft. In other parts of the country we have beds deposited since these Bagshot sands were laid down upon the sea bottom. We may mention that the stone of which the older portion of Rochester Cathedral is built, is known as Bembridge limestone, which is a freshwater deposit some 150ft. (?) in thickness, and quarried at Bembridge in the North part of the Isle of Wight, and this, together with overlying beds, were deposited after the Bagshot series.

Since then the Medway has flowed at a lower gradient, cut a channel through the beds South of the chalk, and then eroded a deep channel through the chalk in its course to the sea. For the finest view of this channel or gorge, take the road between Fort Clarence and Borstal—a spectacle that should be appreciated by all, truly a magnificent gorge in the chalk—alas! now being gradually hidden by the builder.

While the river has been wearing its channel through these beds, it has naturally carried the sediment from the material which it has derived from the land and silted or deposited it, in first one part till it has formed a barrier to its course, then in another, still ever onwards to the sea, so that we see how the flat lands sometimes on one side of the river, and now on the opposite, have been derived. These deposits are well seen from Aylesford to its mouth, and the land forming the islands of its delta.

We have mentioned these facts, so that one can form some idea as to what an enormous space of time it must have taken for all these changes to have occurred, and that there is reasonable ground for the great period already alluded to since the deposition of these various beds upon the chalk to the present time.

Upon arriving at Strood from our Eastward trip, we will, after resting, proceed Westward, taking the Cuxton Road past the Temple Farm brickfield referred to previously. After reaching Strood cemetery the beauty of this part of the valley is quite a relief to the narrow stuffy streets of Strood. Even this piece of nature's handiwork is marred by man, for the quantity of smoke belched forth by the numerous cement factories converts this otherwise little paradise into almost a black country at times.



By this time we have reached the large pit at Cuxton just past the schools and opposite Whorn's Place. The various pits or chalk quarries in this neighbourhood form prominent features in the landscape, thus shewing the changes brought about by man on the surface. Last winter a large mass of chalk in this pit, measuring at the surface about 150ft. in length, three or four in width and 100 in depth, fell, providentially for the workmen, in the night, the fall being caused by the same atmospheric agencies exerting their influence here on the sides of the chalk pit as on the cliffs round our coast. We will walk down the slope to the base of the pit. We are struck en route with the wealth of floral beauty in the disused portion of the floor of the pit, in fact, the whole of the country around Strood is a veritable pleasure ground for the botanist as well as the geologist. Having gained a position at a respectful distance from the chalk that is being thrown down by the workmen, we cast an upward glance at this gigantic wall and perceive a difference between the chalk at the top and that at the bottom of the pit; the upper contains a large quantity of flints, while that at the base is characterized by their absence.

Another feature we feel sure you must have noticed, as you have travelled by rail through the chalk cuttings, as well as in most of the chalk



STROOD, FROM THE RESERVOIR.

*Drawn by R. J. Beale.*

pits in the neighbourhood, is the presence of large brown patches, often extending several feet downwards from the surface, sometimes appearing as a circular patch. These patches are known as "pipes," and are cavities in the chalk, formed by the percolation of rain-water, that has dissolved the chalk, leaving the insoluble portion (which resembles a mass of clay and flints). This, when found on the surface of the chalk, forms a good soil for the fine groups of beeches which often make conspicuous landmarks in many parts of the chalk district. Very frequently these pipes have been filled in with material belonging to beds which formerly overlaid the chalk; the presence of sand, gravel, and pebbles is a proof of this point. The pipes do not always extend vertically; frequently they take an oblique course, and hence are seen in a section as a circular patch. As chalk is the most prominent rock in this locality—clay, sand, gravel, building stone, granite, coal, and peat are all termed rocks by the geologist—it may be interesting to learn something of its present and former extent, as well as its composition, and the forms of life which existed during its deposition. It extends, in England, from Bere Head, in Devonshire, and Eastwards through Kent, a distance of 250 miles, reappearing on the coast of France; in another direction, it stretches from Dorsetshire to Flamborough Head, in Yorkshire, 300 miles in extent. Much of the charming scenery of many of the English counties is due to the chalk ranges which traverse the country in various directions, *e.g.*, that of Salisbury Plain, a large table-land of chalk; the Marlborough (the town in the marl, or chalk) and Ilsley Downs, in Berkshire; the Chilterns, in Buckinghamshire; Gog and Magog Hills, in Cambridgeshire; the York and Lincoln Wolds; the North Downs of Hants,

Surrey, and Kent, of which the chalk of the Strood district forms a part; and the South Downs of Hants and Sussex. These hills are the ridges formed by the folds of the chalk during upheaval with the intervening beds, of later deposition than the chalk. On the other hand, the North Downs are separated from the South by beds of earlier deposition, so that the intervening beds in this case have been uplifted, thus fracturing the chalk. They are of an older character, laid down prior to the chalk, and are now surrounded by it. The chalk, as it emerged from the sea, became gradually planed off by the action of the water, so that the whole of this enormous thickness of chalk, as we shall presently see, which once stretched from Burham to Lewes and Brighton, has been denuded, the chalk and flints have become disintegrated, and the flints rolled into pebbles, and are now to be seen composing part of the Woolwich and Reading beds at Upnor.

The chalk originally extended from Antrim in the North of Ireland—where it is now seen covered by large masses of volcanic rock, namely basalt, which, as it was ejected over the surface of the chalk, has completely baked and hardened it so that you trace little resemblance, except in colour, to the soft white chalk before us—to the shores of the Crimea, and from Scotland, Denmark, South of Sweden to the South of France, so that one can thus see what a large area of Europe was once covered by this deposition of the Chalk Sea. We will next deal with its thickness. Altogether a depth of about 1600 feet of chalk has been laid down in this country. In Norfolk it attains a depth of 1200 feet. Over most of the country where the chalk comes to the surface, or forms as we term it the “outcrop,” a thousand feet of the uppermost beds have been carried away while emerging from the sea during upheaval. The chalk at Gravesend and that in the Margate district probably represent the highest beds south of Norwich.

The chalk is classified as upper, middle, and lower, each division being characterized by certain fossils as well as by a change in the mineral character of the chalk. Moreover flints are formed abundantly in the Upper chalk, except in the neighbourhood of Bridlington in Yorkshire. The Middle chalk assumes a yellowish white and sometimes a greenish colour, and is often of a hard nodular character, and much more difficult to quarry than the Upper. Such is the case here at Cuxton; the upper part of the chalk has an abundance of flints, is soft and easily worked, while half way down the flints gradually disappear and blasting is necessary to remove it. At Strood, the Quarry being in Upper chalk it is easily levered down, as also at Gravesend and “the Quarry” at Frindsbury. You will perceive that the chalk at the base of our Cuxton pit is of a closer texture, and were we to proceed to some of the pits at Burham we should find part of the Upper, the Middle and Lower chalk well exposed, the last being much darker in colour when wet and known locally as “Greychalk,” and especially valuable for cement. In several parts of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, and Norfolk, the bottom beds of the Lower chalk are used locally as building stone (“Totternhoe stone” from Totternhoe in Bedfordshire). It has indeed been largely made use of in many of the churches for interior work, but it is not sufficiently durable for external purposes, though I have seen cottages in Cambridgeshire built of it. The “Beer Freestone” (from Beer, a village in Devonshire) used by stone-masons, belongs to this bed.

The reader may reasonably ask “What is chalk?” We may define it as a soft white limestone, and the lime being chemically united with carbonic acid it is termed a carbonate of lime. In proof of this take a small piece of chalk and pour on it a few drops of hydrochloric acid, *i.e.*, chlorine gas dissolved in water and better known as spirits of salts. We shall notice that a rapid effervescence takes place owing to the particles of lime exchanging places with the chlorine and liberating the carbonic acid gas in the form of bubbles. Originally the chalk consisted of a whitish slimy mud similar to that now forming at great depths in various parts of the bed of the Atlantic Ocean. In the slimy mud of which our chalk is composed are buried myriads upon myriads of exceedingly minute, microscopic, animals of the lowest type, having a shell of lime, often beautifully perforated, and hence called Foraminifera (from *foramen*—a hole, and *fero*—to carry or bear); several species also have cases of flint and



are exquisitely marked, forming lovely objects for the microscope, which alone reveals their marvellous beauty. In addition to these, the Chalk Ocean was inhabited by sponges (especially abundant here), corals, mollusca (such as oysters and allied species), including one which is very common, and resembles a large cockle covered with spines, though usually the spines are broken; pectens (scallops), and small clusters of minute animals which have left their skeletons, often of exquisite beauty, on the shells of the mollusca and echinoderms, the latter deserving special notice, as they are plentiful and many of them comprise some of the most beautiful chalk fossils. They are well known to every resident in a chalk district, being known locally as "shepherd's crowns," "fairy loaves," "the helmet" and "sugar loaves." Starfishes of different forms from the present well-known type existed. Sea-lilies or encrinites, lowly animals on jointed stems with branches at the apex resembling a palm, are met with; nautilus also existed and its cousin the ammonite—known in the Cuxton district as "colts" and as "ram's horns," "snake stones" in other localities—and belemnites or cuttlefish, whose remains are termed "pencils," "cock's spurs" and "thunderbolts" in other parts of the country; they are not met with in the Strood chalk, but occur at Gravesend, Snodland and Burham. At the last place we have seen an ammonite more than two feet in diameter.

Huge lizard-like creatures (*Ichthyosaurus* and *Plesiosaurus*) as well as a flying lizard (*Pterodactyl*) were living at this period, but became extinct, as did also the ammonites and belemnites. Fossil remains of about forty different species of fish are met with, consisting mostly of the more durable parts of the body, such as the teeth, with occasional vertebrae and fragments of other bones. Scales are frequently found, but, on the whole, are too fragmentary to enable one to identify their original possessor.

In some parts, rounded pebbles of various rocks, quite distinct from the flints, are found. I have obtained several from the Northfleet area, but only one from Cuxton. They were found frequently some years ago at Burham. One reasonably asks "how do you account for them in the chalk?" There are three theories as to how they came into their present position. The first assumes that they were swallowed by huge fishes, to aid the digestion of their food, so that after the death and decay of the animal, they would naturally be distributed on the floor of the Chalk Sea, and become embedded in its mud. Secondly, they may have been brought by floating icebergs, which as they melted in warmer waters would release the rocks and pebbles and so be deposited on the sea bottom just as at the present time. The third theory assumes that they have been carried by drifting trees, in the earth entangled by their roots, and gradually released. Trees have been known to drift a thousand miles from land. In each of the above cases they must have been derived from a land surface, and rolled into pebbles on a beach of the Chalk Sea. Remains of plants, belonging to the fir-tribe (*Conifera*) are occasionally found embedded in the chalk and converted into flint, whilst impressions of sea-weed are also met with. One very important feature, though most prominent of all, we have left until last, viz., the flints. They have formed the subject of many a puzzling enquiry, and a great deal still remains to be made clear as regards their origin. They are unlike the pebbles above referred to, in that the pebbles are the remains of pre-existent beds, while the flints have been formed in the chalk itself.

Our friend naturally asks, "What is their composition?" In order to answer this question we assume that our readers know that the solid portion of the earth's crust is composed of elements (simple substances) out of which nothing else can be obtained. At present we are only going to deal with two of them; one is the gaseous element oxygen, which is universally present and forms half the weight of the globe, the other is silicon.

Now oxygen has the property of combining chemically with this silicon, as with every other element, and forms a compound known as silica. It is silica which gives to grass and corn stalks their shining, glassy appearance, and at the same time renders them, when mature, hard and brittle, as one finds to one's cost when walking across a stubbly cornfield with thin shoes. The silica has been taken with other dissolved mineral substances into the tissues of the root and has then become distributed through the plant. Silica then can be held in solution; at the present day there are large masses of

silicious matter known as *sinter*, formed at the mouth of geysers or boiling springs, the waters of which have been charged with this matter, and which has been left after the water has cooled and evaporated. It is difficult to tread on any part of the earth's surface without meeting with it in some form or other. The ancient Chalk Sea contained, in addition to dissolved silica, innumerable sponges and microscopic forms of animal and plant life whose skeletons consist of silica, and these, on the death of the animal, may have been re-dissolved, when the silica thus liberated would remain in solution to be re-deposited. Frequently it would collect (or aggregate) round some organism containing silica, and so entirely envelop the original structure that the whole would be converted into a solid mass. This we term flint.

Fossils of molluscs are often met with in which the test or shell, which is composed of lime, as at present, retains its original form, but of which the interior, which must originally have been filled with chalk mud, has been replaced by silica, so that when the shell is detached a perfect mould or "cast" of the interior is preserved in flint. We now see how it is that so many casts of sea urchins (the "shepherd's crown," etc.) and mollusca are found among the gravels and picked from the surface of the fields. As the chalk was denuded during its emergence from the sea these fossils would, naturally, on being detached from the chalk, become rolled and their shells broken, whereas the flinty cast would retain its shape and becoming mixed with the flint nodules, contribute to the beds of gravel which have been subsequently washed down to their present position by rivers and floods.

It is not uncommon, on breaking a flint, to find that the silica has invested, or completely covered, the original shell, or has become partially embedded in the flint; spines and fragments of shells are constantly found in this condition. If a piece of flint be prepared for the microscope by grinding till it has become transparent, and then examined, you will see that it is frequently crowded with the remains of sponges (spicules) and minute shells. Where wood is found in flint, the original tissues have been so entirely and so beautifully replaced by silica as to completely preserve the characteristic markings, which are only revealed by the microscope. As regards the mode of occurrence of flints in the chalk, besides being found scattered as nodules, they occur more frequently in horizontal layers. Wherever the chalk has been upheaved vertically, as at Culver Cliff and The Needles, Isle of Wight, and Swanage, the beds of flints appear as vertical lines, or they may form curved lines if the beds are contorted; sometimes one finds a huge sheet of flints extending over a considerable area; this form is known as "tabular" flint. Occasionally the oblique fissures in the chalk are filled in with tabular flint, which must have been deposited since the formation of the chalk, and probably by the dissolution of sandy beds which overlaid the chalk, when the water in percolating the underlying chalk has conveyed and re-deposited the silica. Before leaving the flints it will be as well to say a little on their form and use. Very erroneous ideas prevail among some people, who, seeing in the fantastic shapes taken by flints during their formation a resemblance to the limbs of men and animals, and also to fungi (the mushroom tribe of plants), assume that they are really fossils of such objects, &c. But the flint was deposited long ages before man trod this earth. The circular and globular flints so frequently met with are the remains of a certain species of sponge. It is by no means a rare thing to find the cavity of a hollow flint filled with a mealy white powder, which represents the fragments of the original sponge. In other cases the cavities are lined with sparkling crystals, which are the minute faces of quartz, or rock crystal, another form of silica, from which, when pure, spectacles are made. In others, a grape-like, waxy, and semi-transparent appearance is assumed by the silica, and is known as "chalcedony." As regards the use of flint, we are acquainted with its early application. What better material could Nature offer to the semi-savage who scoured the country in search of game, than flint, which he soon acquired the art of shaping into forms to suit his purpose, whether as an implement or weapon. Owing to the abundance of flints, especially in Norfolk, they have been for centuries largely used by the builder—the tower of Frindsbury Church affords a local example, among many others,



*From a Photo]*

STROOD, FROM THE RESERVOIR.

[By J. H. Welch.]



of their being so used. Thousands of tons are exported from the Gravesend district every year to the North of England, for the purpose of glass-making. Flints that have been exposed in fields, where they are always accumulating, owing to the gradual disintegration of the chalk,\* are "picked" off by women, and sold by the farmer for the purpose of road-making, and, as a rule, make excellent roads, when properly rolled. At Brandon, in Suffolk, there is a manufactory where flints are still "knapped," or worked into gun-flints, and these are supplied to the natives in many parts of Africa.

"What is this round and heavy mass resembling iron?" These masses are locally known as "thunderbolts," and here we may remove another misconception, as they are generally believed to be of meteoric origin. Fracture one of them, by giving it a smart blow and there is revealed a beautiful interior consisting of a somewhat silvery brass-like lustre with radiating needle shaped crystals; these are occasionally found in masses of cubical and other forms of crystallization. This metallic mass is composed simply of iron and sulphur, which has become chemically united by the liberation of those elements on the decay of the animals and plants entombed in the chalk mud. By placing a piece of this sulphide of iron (or iron pyrites) in a clear fire you will easily perceive for yourself that it contains sulphur, and as it is abundantly met with in nature, it is used in the manufacture of sulphuric acid. It would be superfluous to comment on the use of chalk to a resident of this neighbourhood, with the cement factories dotted here and there up the river from Upnor to Aylesford; and as we have now dealt with the chalk and its contents generally, we will wend our way back to Strood, after ferrying across the Medway, by way of Blue Bell hill. What a charm the name of this spot possesses for those who have ceased to be residents in the Strood district! The glorious expanse and character of the view is unequalled in Kent; often have we, resting on the edge of the chalk pit just below, with the smell of the wild thyme, and the hum of the bees, and the music of the birds, on all sides, gazing at the panorama before us, seemed to take a new draft of life and have left the scene thoroughly re-invigorated. Even now the vivid memory of these pleasures tends to send the daily cares of life into oblivion. We are now quite on the edge of the outcrop of the chalk and the sharp edge forming this steep hill is termed an "escarpment." Before turning our back on this lovely scene, so full of interest to the artist as well as the student of nature, we cast a glance at the field just on the right of the road leading to Maidstone, almost opposite "The Lower Bell," and see the renowned cromlech of Kit's Coty.

Those who are familiar with the spot must often have wondered where the ancient Britons obtained these stones, each weighing several tons. The cromlech itself probably marks the burial site of one of the British chiefs. During the early part of our ramble, we saw that the Bagshot sands capped the London clay at Sheppey. We then stated that these extended over a very large area, which is now chalk; these stones, termed Sarcens, and of which Kit's Coty is constructed, are the remains of consolidated portions of these beds, which have withstood denudation. They are found scattered over many parts of the chalk in the South of England. They are often met with in a fragmentary state in the gravel pits with the flints. A good sized specimen stands opposite the late Charles Dickens' residence, at the corner of the road which leads to Higham. Specimens of Sarcens may also be seen on the Cuxton Road, before reaching the cemetery, placed at intervals along the edge of the path.

We now retrace our steps and may, *en route*, briefly discuss the character of the chalk scenery. We note that, East and West, the chalk extends in a comparatively horizontal plane except where carved out by the Medway and Darent. The gentle undulations which tend to relieve the eye, and which characterize the chalk districts, are due to fissures, and thus natural lines of drainage have been formed. The soil produced in such parts, owing to the chemical and mechanical effects of the rain water, is of

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\* This gives rise to the belief among the peasantry in a chalk country that the flints grow!

greater fertility than the barren "bed" or native rock, which often lies only an inch or two beneath turf on the hill sides, but yet sufficient to yield an abundance of wild flowers to gladden the eyes of the botanist. Agriculturally, the chalk itself supports scanty vegetation, except when covered by "brick earths" and clay with flints. On the former, we find many of our hop gardens and corn and fruit crops flourish; and where the chalk is capped by clay with flints, we immediately note a contrast, in the appearance of a richly-wooded district, the beech trees being a prominent feature, as is seen in the Shorne-Cobham woods.

Returning Westward along the edge or "strike" of the escarpment—as this steep Southern face or slope of the chalk is termed—past "The Robin Hood" with Wouldham (the home or dwelling on the Wold) on the left by way of Borstal, we cannot leave this magnificent view without a pause and sigh of regret. On our right we have Rochester, Chatham, with Sheerness in the distance, on the left we see the Medway just below us, cutting through the "gault"—a stiff blue clay, a marine deposit, and full of fossils often beautifully preserved—a good section of which is seen in the Burham brickfield, at the edge of the river. Beyond this we have another series of beds termed the Lower Greensand, which joins the high wooded and fertile ground round Aylesford, Maidstone, Ightham and Sevenoaks. Time and space will not permit a description of this most interesting series, but we cannot dismiss them without mentioning the fact that this range of hills running along Westward to Sevenoaks is known as the "Ragstone" range from the fact that the building stone known locally as "Kentish Rag" is obtained from one member of the series known as the "Hythe Beds" where they attain their greatest development. It is the hardest portions of the beds which are worked. The stone owes its hardness to a large amount of silica which has consolidated the softer limestone, and thus prevents it being carved or used for decorative purposes. The softer portion is extensively used for road "metal" around Rochester, Maidstone, and the district generally. The greater portion of the exterior of St. Nicholas' and St. Mary's churches is built of Kentish Rag, also part of Frindsbury church, The Bridge Wardens' chambers, and All Souls' chapel, adjoining Rochester Castle, the porch pillars of St. Nicholas' being of Portland oolite (the pillars and window shafts of St. Mary's and the Bridge Wardens' chambers being of Bath oolite (both being a "freestone" *i.e.*, easily worked) and so named owing to the oolitic or egg-like structure of the minute grains which constitute the mass of the rock, each one containing the remains of an organism or fragment of one, the whole being cemented by the lime which was in solution when the beds were deposited. This member, like its predecessor the gault, is also of marine origin, as is shewn by its fossil contents. The name "lower" greensand necessarily implies the existence of another, the upper greensand, which is scarcely represented in this area; it occurs between the lowest member of the chalk, the chalk marl, and the gault, and in the Isle of Wight and Dorsetshire attains a thickness of from 100ft. to 300ft. As regards the latter term, greensand, this is often a misnomer; the green-coated sand-grains when found are covered with a deposit of silicate of iron; more frequently the green grains are absent; in some cases they have been so acted upon by the oxygen of the atmosphere and that in the water percolating the soil as to have become completely changed to red grains, and so have the appearance of red earth, as at "Red Hill" near Reigate.

Beyond Maidstone we see the dome of the beds, known as The Weald, coming to the surface, forming the high land on which stands Tenterden, Rolvenden, &c., and beyond this Fairlight and Hastings, while immediately flanking this we come to the chalk of Folkestone and Dover on the left, and Brighton, Eastbourne, etc., on the right. One may now try to realise the forces of Nature which upheaved the country between the chalk here and that of the South Downs. We now resume our homeward journey, observing a "dug valley" on our right extending from the "Robin Hood" to Rochester, forming a prominent feature on the right hand side as one walks from Rochester to Blue Bell hill. These dug valleys have been carved out in comparatively recent times, and were once no doubt occupied by streams when the Medway and Thames flowed at a higher level than at present. In some



parts of the country, after very wet seasons, the "water table" in point of super-saturation rises above the sides of the valley and a stream flows for the time being and is termed a "Bourne"; some bournes are constant, others flow only at certain periods, as the Winter Bourne in Berkshire. One can easily distinguish the derivation of the names of many streams and villages by the term "bourne," "burn," or "born," as the Ravensbourne which flows into the Quaggy at Lewisham and thence into the Thames at Deptford; Westbourne Park from the West-bourne; Kilburn, Tyburne, Holborn; and the Lambourne (or Lamb's-bourne) flowing into the Kennet; and further afield, in Devonshire, Otterbourne etc. On our way we might well consider the source of water supply for the district. Fortunately, in one sense, the mass of rock in this neighbourhood is chalk, which possesses great absorbent powers; for proof of this take a perfectly dry piece of chalk and place the same in a basin of water, there will then be left very little room for doubt. One can see now how that the roads of this district—outside the towns—are preferred by the pedestrian and cyclist, in bad weather, to those water and slush-covered roads in the London district where the impervious underlying London clay prevents its escape to lower depths. Hence our chalk becomes a gigantic reservoir holding many millions of tons of water; so that a well sunk in the chalk at an ordinary depth yields a ready supply. On uplands it is obvious that a greater depth will have to be reached—depending on the nearness of the slope of the valley. The great drawback to water derived from the chalk is the fact that it is sent to the consumer with a large amount of lime in solution. This has been dissolved by the action of the carbonic acid taken by the rain water into the soil, and gives the water the bad quality of being "hard." Water companies who study the public (unfortunately they are in the minority) have a very simple process by which this excess of mineral matter is abstracted by precipitation, and so send their water to the consumer in a soft and pure condition. As the amount of water in the chalk depends upon the rainfall, it is consequently liable to great fluctuations, especially in dry seasons; hence it is sometimes found expedient to penetrate to beds below the chalk in order to obtain a less uncertain supply.

The well at the Strood waterworks is sunk into the chalk only, while at Messrs. Spencer Bros'. oil mills, also at Chattenden magazines and Chatham Dockyard Extension, artesian wells (from Artois in France, where these deep wells were first used) have been sunk, which give a greater and more constant supply. Appended will be found the depth and thickness of the strata penetrated in the boring of the wells just mentioned.

There is one more point that is worth considering before closing this sketch, that is the occurrence from time to time of underground cavities in the chalk; they are termed "dene holes," and are usually a corruption of den holes, and are usually approached by a shaft which widens out into a funnel-shaped structure. They are generally supposed to have been used as hiding places by the early inhabitants of the country. Two such were discovered in Mr. R. West's brickfield on Windmill Hill.

We are now nearing home, and are close to Fort Clarence on the Borstal road, where we have an unequalled view of the Medway flowing directly below us, and of Strood on our right. The bank side presents a fine section of alluvium resting directly on the chalk, comparing exactly with the section on Strood Hill opposite the waterworks. Wending our way through the most delightful part of old Rochester, down St. Margaret's Street, and Boley Hill, past the beautifully-restored western front of the cathedral, whose open door exhibits a quiet secluded interior full of the memories of past centuries, and on to the narrow High Street, we cross the bridge and find ourselves again in Strood, after having turned over only the last few pages of our earth's history, pages, however, that must have occupied millions of years in the writing. Time will not permit even a reference to the highly interesting series of rocks below the Wealden formation, which lower beds occupy the greater part of the South and centre of England, away up into Northumberland, or the much older stratified rocks of Devon, Cornwall, and Wales, or the still older rocks which form many of the mountains of Wales and Scotland, many of them being the seat of old volcanoes, and contribute to the rugged grandeur of

the scenery of these parts. When we consider, or try to realize that, in various parts of the world, 5,000ft. in thickness of beds have been laid down since the chalk was deposited; and during the cretaceous period, another 5,000ft., whilst, prior to cretaceous times, at least 100,000ft. of stratified beds were laid down on the pre-existent granitic rocks of this country, (which also forms the bulk of the Highlands of Scotland); then we obtain some idea of the æons of ages which must have elapsed since this planet came into existence, whilst the stupendous facts that crowd upon the mind seem almost incomprehensible, and well may one exclaim, as did the Hebrew Psalmist of old, "The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein."

### THE DEEP WELLS IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD.

#### MESSRS. SPENCER'S OIL MILLS, STROOD.

	ft.	in.
Alluvium .. .. .	42	0
Tertiary beds .. .. .	0	0
Upper and middle chalk .. .. .	305	0
Lower chalk and chalk marl .. .. .	194	0
Upper greensand .. .. .	6	0
Gault .. .. .	195	0
Lower greensand .. .. .	14	10
	756	10

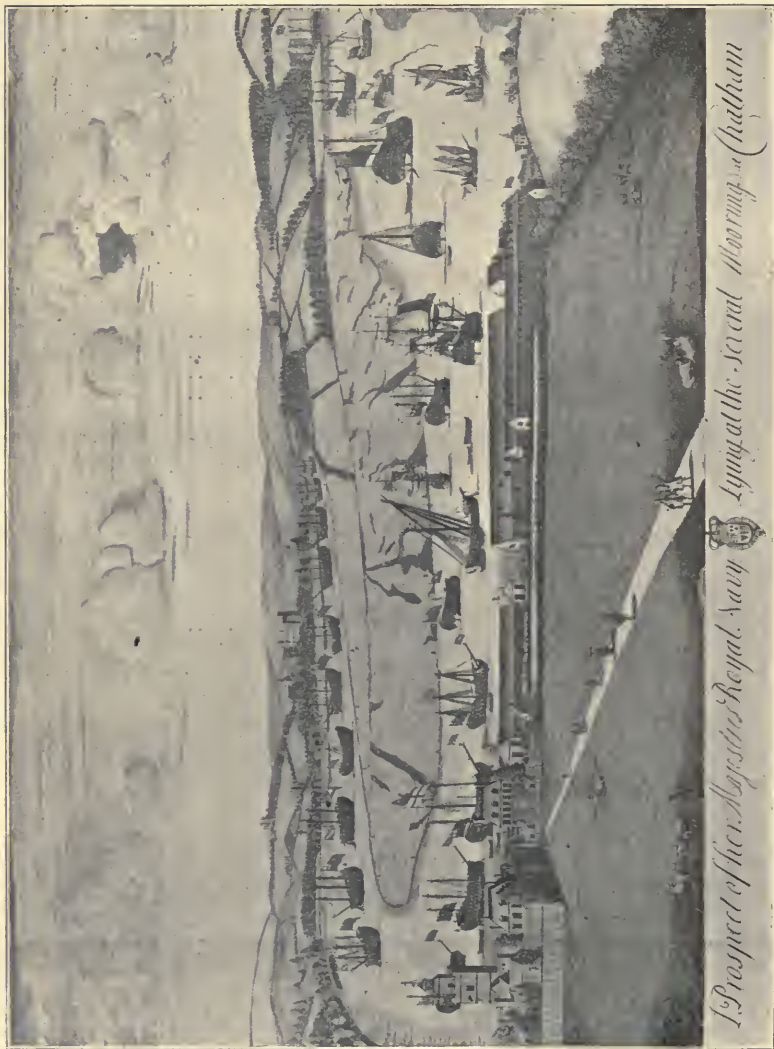
#### CHATTENDEN.

Alluvium .. .. .	0	0
Tertiary beds .. .. .	200	0
Upper and middle chalk .. .. .	682	0
Lower chalk and chalk marl .. .. .	0	0
Upper greensand .. .. .	0	0
Gault .. .. .	190	0
Lower greensand .. .. .	3	0
	1142	0

#### CHATHAM DOCKYARD.

Made ground alluvium .. .. .	27	0
Tertiary beds .. .. .	?	
Upper and middle chalk .. .. .	682	0
Lower chalk and chalk marl .. .. .	0	0
Upper greensand .. .. .	0	0
Gault .. .. .	193	0
Lower greensand .. .. .	41	0
*Oxford clay .. .. .	22	0
	965	0

\* A main deposit, 400ft. thick, laid down after 950ft. in thickness of other strata had been deposited between this and the last member of the Lower greensand. It will be seen that the intervening beds from the Oxford clay to the greensand had been denuded prior to the Oxford clay being laid down in this locality.



# STROOD : ITS FLORA AND FAUNA.

BY

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Editor *Entomologist's Record and Journal of Variation*;

Ex-President City of London Entomological and Natural History Society,  
etc., etc.

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THE position of Strood makes it exceedingly rich so far as its fauna and flora are concerned. The marshes, which run along the banks of the Medway, produce those specialised groups of plants and animals peculiar to such a habitat. The protective ridges of chalk-hills, which rise around the town, bear a wealth of flowers never found off the limestone formations, whilst the Tertiary clays which cap these hills and carry our woods, complete a series of geological conditions which would be difficult to equal elsewhere in so limited an area.

As may be expected from these facts, the animals, birds, insects and flowers of Strood are of the most varied and interesting description, for every geological formation is peopled with its own peculiar species of insects and flowers, and, hence, we obtain many local and rare forms as well as those of more general distribution. In the marshes, marsh birds, marsh insects, and marsh flowers abound. An entirely different fauna and flora inhabit the woods in our neighbourhood, whilst, on the chalk hills, we find that almost everything again is new.

It will be readily conceded then, that the district is a peculiarly well situated one. True it is that, within the last quarter of a century, the marshes which once extended up to the High Street on either side have been covered with houses, and one has to seek the marsh plants and insects beyond the present outskirts of the rapidly extending town.

It may be well if we consider the main features of our local fauna and flora in a more or less systematic manner and separately notice the principal inhabitants of our marshes, our chalk-hills and our woods.

## THE MARSHES.

The marshes are the home of many rare dragon-flies and caddis-flies. The former insist on being noticed, and the nature-lover, even if he be not a naturalist, is sure to have observed them. The latter are less conspicuous and more easily passed by. Their larvæ live in the pools, and make strange-looking cases of tiny shells and small pieces of stone fastened together with tough silk. These houses they carry about on their backs, protruding only their heads and legs from the entrance as they move from place to place under the water in search of food, and withdrawing themselves entirely at the slightest suspicion of danger. Aquatic beetles, too, abound, the great water beetle (*Dytiscus marginalis*) being especially abundant.

Among the moths a large number of species occur, some of considerable rarity. The most remarkable of these are the pond-weed moth (*Cataglyphis lemna*), and the mottled marsh china marks (*Hydrocampa nymphaeata* and *H. stagnata*). These moths have wings of a pearly white colour with strange hieroglyphics figured thereon, and from which the popular name "China-mark" has been derived. They flutter by night in hundreds just above the surface of the water, but it is the caterpillars of these moths that offer the greatest interest. They make silken tubes, which contain air, and in which



they move from place to place under the water, each having, as it were, its own diving-bell. The lovely pinky-white "wave" moth (*Acidalia emutaria*) is found on the marshes; so, also, is the white snout moth (*Herminia cribralis*) the gentlemen of which carry large scented fans on their fore-feet with which to charm their lady-loves. The Wainscot moths, which are almost confined to fenny districts, are particularly abundant. By the reed-beds, as dusk comes on, these pallid Noctuid moths are to be seen—sometimes in thousands—hurrying, skurrying, by the ditch-sides, intent on the one business of their lives—egg-laying. These are deposited on the tall reeds, coarse grasses and carices, on the roots and leaves of which their larvæ feed. The large yellow drinker moth (*Odonestis potatoria*) and still larger purple-brown lappet moth (*Gastropacha quercifolia*) boom heavily along in the late dusk, the former searching for a suitable tuft of coarse grass, and the latter for a black-thorn bush, on which to lay their eggs.

By day the willows that are found on the edge of the marshes are well worth searching. The green larva of the eyed hawk moth (*Smerinthus ocellatus*) sits immovably on a twig, and, in spite of its large size, is so inconspicuous, that one almost passes it over for a leaf on which the sun is shining. The terrible-looking caterpillar of the puss moth (*Cerura vinula*) sits on the same bushes, and, if irritated, sends out the red flagella with lightning rapidity from its bifid tail as a warning to those who approach too closely, or, if this warning be not heeded, it shoots with unerring accuracy a stream of formic acid in the face of the intruder, from the slit beneath its chin in which the powerful glands which secrete this fluid are situated.

In the calm dusk of a midsummer evening the white ghost moth (*Hepialus humuli*) swings with its pendulum like flight, two or three feet above the grass, throwing out a delightful scent from the feathery glands on his hind legs in order to attract his lady-love. Then, in August, when the sea-lavender (*Statice limonium*) throws a sheet of living blue over acres of the peaty soil and fades away in the distance in a haze of delicate softness and exquisite charm, the long-legged plume moth (*Agdistis bennettii*) dances gnat-like above the blossoms after dark, or skips blithely from plant to plant. Lastly, when the first dews of autumn warn us of departing summer, the bulrush beds attract our attention, and the many plants with fading yellow central leaf warn us of an insidious foe within, and, if we carefully cut down one of these affected plants, we shall find, low in the stem, a carefully hollowed chamber in which is safely ensconced a fat brown pupa, the product of the larva which has done so much damage to the plant. In a few days the brown pupa will produce the well-known bulrush moth (*Nonagria arundinis*), and, with its arrival, we know that most of the insects that have attracted us to the marshes have departed for the year.

Butterflies are rare on our marshes, for the latter offer but few attractions to these delicate children of the sun. Still the Vanessid butterflies love the tortoiseshell and teases that grow in abundance on their borders, and the tortoiseshell (*Aglais urticae*), peacock (*Vanessa io*), painted lady (*Pyrameis cardui*) and red admiral (*P. atalanta*) butterflies are often to be seen fanning their brilliant wings in the sun whilst seated on one of their favourite flowers. The white and blue butterflies only give the marshes a passing visit. They love better the lanes and fields and woods around.

But the marsh birds are exceedingly interesting, and one might fill with ease a small volume on the habits of the feathered denizens of our marshes. First and foremost the brilliant kingfisher claims our attention. This beautiful bird used to be exceedingly abundant both on the marshes towards Cuxton and on those towards Upnor, but the Sunday prowler with his gun has made sad work of late with this charming resident, and it is some time now since I saw its flash of sapphire blue along one of our ditch-sides. Still it may be that I haunt the old spots less systematically now than I once used to do, and that the rarity of the bird is more apparent than real. The marsh warblers are all pretty abundant, and one still hears, during the nesting-season, the charming notes of the sedge warbler and the trill of the grasshopper warbler, whilst the marsh tit may often be seen busily hunting over the old tree stumps and posts for insect food. The early evening is the time to listen to these songsters. Then in the stillness of a summer dream, the soft cadences are carried on the air, and the music of the reed



warbler and of the sedge warbler is often enriched by the thrilling notes which the nightingale pours forth from some thicket by the marsh side.

In the shallow pools the charming and graceful wagtail, with rapid gliding movements runs swiftly along, then suddenly hopping on a stone perkily sets up its tail to keep it from entering the water. But the heron is the bird of these marshes. Standing silently, immovably, on the grey mud by the ditch—or river-side, his sober coat fades into the colour of his surroundings and he becomes invisible. Thus he stands on his stilted legs, the water passing over his feet. Something moves in the water below—a rapid movement, a gurgle, and all is silent as before. Thus the heron fishes silently all day and only leaves the marshes when evening warns him that it is time to return to his home in Cobham Park. Then he rises high in the air and his powerful wings soon carry him to the heronry where he dwells.

A sudden splash, and then a ripple on the water trails along from a tuft of coarse rush, iris, or grass forming a small island in the ditch. 'Tis a coot that you have disturbed. It has its nest in the tuft. It ties the iris stems together and thus forms the basis on which it builds its large nest, whilst the reeds or tall plants around hide it from prying eyes. Here it lays some seven or eight eggs, and here it brings up its numerous family. In all the marshes around, too, the dabchick abounds. A strange-looking bird with still stranger habits, for when the hen-bird is disturbed it silently dives into the water, and bringing up waterweeds, artfully contrives to cover the eggs on which she has been sitting, before finally leaving the point of danger.

It is in the winter, however, that the marshes are full of bird life. The migrating bands that stay with us for the winter months are then in our midst. The moving water, owing to the rise and fall of the tide, leaves the marshes open, when the hills and fields around are thickly covered with snow, or iron-bound with frost. Then the gulls, Norwegian crows and other coast birds come inland. Flocks of fieldfares and redwings from the Scandinavian forests are everywhere. Thrushes and blackbirds, too, are there—not those that rob our trees in autumn, and, in return clear them of insect pests in spring, but birds that have come to winter with us and will return to their Northern homes again when spring is here once more. Large flocks of wild-fowl hide in the dead reed-beds by day and fly off towards the sea to feed by night. The beautiful ringed dotterel is, in some years, not uncommon, and the water-rail plays hide and seek in the clumps of dead and dying plants that thickly clothe the ditch side. The great snipe and jack snipe rise with a whirr to pursue their headlong and zigzag flight. In short, there are very few marsh-birds inhabiting Britain that do not occasionally visit our local marshes, for, indeed, are not our marshes merely a continuation of those that run on to the mouth of the Thames, and are not these again a part of those vast stretches, dreary and interminable, that run along our eastern shores, and which in winter have been described as:—

“Miles and miles and miles of desolation  
League on league without a change”—

but, certainly when the migrating hordes people these endless wastes no nature lover will agree with the poet as to their desolation.

Every naturalist knows that the marshes around our town are a veritable flower garden if the right spots be visited. But the flowers are such that they can only be found in similar moist and murky spots. Water-marigolds and king-cups, water-lilies and irises, marsh violets and lovely marsh forget-me-nots, used to occur on the ground now appropriated by the Railway Companies for their stations, and are still to be obtained a short distance beyond the outskirts of the town. Umbellifers, their feathery leaves like graceful fern-fronds playing in the slightest breeze, and throwing twinkling shadows on the ground beneath, are also here. So, too, is the great willow-herb, with its pretty red tubular blossoms and cottony seeds, whilst clumps of red or lilac-hued *Eupatorium* sway in the August breeze and open to the sun. The marsh thistle and water figwort, the purple loose-strife and giant water docks, rear up their tall heads above the rank herbage of rushes and grasses, the species of which, here, appear to be innumerable. Then the handsome water soldier beautifies, here and there, the pools with its delicate

blossoms, whilst the green *Lemna* or duckweed covers, as with an alluring carpet, the ponds and ditches everywhere. Upon the duckweed the lovely little *Catalysta lemnaea* sports in summer, and sometimes appears in such abundance that one might almost be forgiven for supposing the pure white atoms were the frail and delicate blossoms of the slimy green *Lemna* below.

Hosts of treasures, then, still people our marshes, and make them yet a delightful haunt for the naturalist; and one may hope that the time may be far distant when the necessities of the builder and the exigencies of cement making shall have banished for ever some of nature's choicest treasures from our midst.

### THE CHALKHILLS.

Far beyond and around our town the chalk hills stretch. In fact, it is situated between two of the parallel ridges that help to form the range of the North Downs in this particular locality. One ridge runs from Frindsbury towards Gravesend in one direction, towards Upnor and Sittingbourne in the opposite, while the second ridge runs through Cuxton and on towards Rainham, beyond which both unite. The former ridge in this neighbourhood is bare, the latter capped with woods of oak and beech. Frindsbury Church stands out now gaunt and alone. What vandal hand cut down the lovely trees in which it was once embosomed? Such wanton destruction seems little short of sacrilege.

To the native, the breezy chalk hills are everywhere. Walk in whatever direction you will—to Upnor, Ranscombe, Bush, Cuxton, or Burham—you climb their steep, sloping banks, and see the glorious old woods by which they are surmounted. Thymy banks stretch all around, whilst the orchards lie in the hollows between the strong sheltering hills, and the old Medway flows in silver radiance in that deep bed that it has cut through hundreds of feet of solid chalk to reach its present level. Cast your eye around, and then concentrate your mind on the most beautiful spots you have ever seen, and say whether, anywhere, nature has been more lavish than in the neighbourhood of this our own native town, which appears to us, indeed, to be the centre of sunny Kent, famed the wide world over for "Hops, fair maids, cherries, and civility."

The flowers of the chalk are very different from those of the marsh, and consequently the insects and other creeping things are equally different. The porous chalk does not hold the water, and hence one searches for water-plants in vain. Ferns, too, are absent on the exposed hills, and at a short distance these look bare and almost barren, but this is not so, as every nature lover knows. The clematis hangs in festoons from the hedges, forming a delicate verdant drapery in spring, a mass of flowers in summer, and covers the other plants with a coating of fluffy "old man's beard" in winter. The wild cherry throws out its masses of floral snow in early spring, whilst, in autumn, the red berries of the cornel bush (*Cornus sanguinea*) make patches of brilliance even in a hedge where the lovely maple displays its parting beauty. No, the hedges on the chalk hills are not to be despised, and will more than favourably compare with their neighbours elsewhere, especially in June, when the dogrose creeps along, holding firmly with its thorny stem, and throwing out its sweet-scented blossoms, clad in red and pink and white, and giving place here and there to a gnarled hawthorn, or to the massive elms, which are, about Strood, the glory of the hedges.

The rock rose (*Helianthemum vulgare*) makes yellow carpets with its bright blossoms, whilst from the scrubby bushes that stand yonder, the west wind comes laden with the delicious sweetness of the scent of the sweetbriar, and the marjoram also lends its aid. That rough patch on the chalk hills is a bed of wild sage, and the bright blue flower by the footpath is the chicory (*Chicorium intybus*). In autumn, great plants of wild mignonette are here and there to be seen, and everywhere plants of viper's bugloss (*Echium vulgare*). This reminds us, too, of the blue bugle (*Ajuga reptans*), the pink centaury (*Erythraea centaurea*) and the milkwort (*Polygala vulgaris*), all of which, like the bugloss, are inclined to change the colours of their flowers when growing upon these dry chalk banks. Pale varieties of these

flowers are here very common, the variation being, undoubtedly, directly due to some peculiarity of the environment and only indirectly to the chalk on which the plants grow. The pink centaury is here often white as snow; the blue bugle, sometimes pink, at other times white; whilst even bugloss is frequently of a reddish tint.

The lovely vetches and trefoils are in force on the slopes. The horse-shoe (*Hippocrepis comosa*), the bird's-foot trefoil, and similar plants abound, and make carpets of richest yellow when in blossom. Umbellifers grow in abundance by the hedgesides and in the shaws, the hemlocks sometimes reaching to an immense height; the rough-leaved mulleins are not uncommon, whilst, in autumn, great teasels are to be seen, on the blossoms of which the lovely peacock and the red admiral butterflies sit and fan their rich wings in the August sunlight. In the winter, when their prickly heads rise, bare and forbidding, the caterpillars of two little Tortricid moths clear out the seeds so completely, that it is often impossible to find a head that has escaped their ravages. A good thing for the farmer, who, if it were not for these two little, and almost unknown, friends, would soon have his land covered with teasel plants.

Numberless other plants are to be found—fleabane, hawkbits, mallows campanulas, and orchids. Charming bell flowers are these campanulas; marvellously instructive the orchids. Have you yet learned the secret of their fertilisation? If not, pray do so. Hellebore and columbines bear little similarity to the buttercups whose near relatives they are, and the wonderful stamens of the St. John's wort will surely attract attention. Juniper flourishes, here and there, in what often look most barren spots, and birch sometimes contrives to get sufficient nutriment from the almost bare rock to carry on a precarious existence.

Scarcely a single plant that we have named, but has one or more species of insects attached to it. The chalk hills are, however, *par excellence*, the home of the blue butterflies. Almost all the known British species exist in the neighbourhood, their caterpillars feeding on the vetches and trefoils that are so abundant. Beds of stinging-nettle are often covered with colonies of the small tortoise-shell (*Aglais urticae*) and peacock butterflies. The caterpillars of the white butterflies ravage our gardens, and the orange-tip (*Euchloë cardamines*) brightens the wayside in spring with its brilliant colour. The brimstone butterfly (*Gonepteryx rhamni*) is to be found wherever buckthorn abounds, hybernating in the perfect stage in winter, and coming from its hiding place with the first warm breath of spring. Skipper butterflies, too, are abundant. In fact, to the entomologist, the chalk hills are a paradise.

Not only do butterflies occur in profusion, but so also do moths. Stand by the clematis bushes one still evening in July and watch the lovely green emerald moth (*Iodis vernaria*) flit ghost-like about the twigs, laying its eggs in rouleaux, one placed upon the other, until the whole looks like a little broken twig. Stand breathless over the viper's bugloss, and watch the humming-bird hawk moth (*Macroglossa stellarum*) insert its long tongue into the nectaries of the flowers; or, at dusk, stand on a thymy bank and observe the thousands of tiny atoms that flit everywhere around you. You pass by and do not see them. They are there, though! The chalk hills teem with insect life.

The hills are here and there honeycombed with the holes the rabbits make. Have you ever seen them on the chalk hills, almost within reach of your windows, gambolling during the first hours of early dawn? Do you know anything more full of life than the hare that you start from its "form" in the hay field, or any more charming picture of ideal happy fluffiness than the tiny rabbit that sits, for the first time, at the entrance of the hole in which it was born? The hedgehog is sometimes found coiled up, the mole is still cruelly treated by the labourers, and field mice abound in the neighbourhood. Blindworms and ringed snakes bask everywhere on these sunny banks, and the kestrel keeps watch, swooping at last with the rapidity of lightning on some unfortunate creature that it has spied.

The birds of the chalk hills are the meadow pipit and the yellow-hammer. Sit by a dwarf bush on the hills, almost anywhere, and there, by



your side, will be the neat, cosy, hay nest with the warm red-brown eggs of the former, or the streaked, purplish eggs of the latter. In yonder rough herbage the partridge broods its young; and the bird, with conspicuous red rump and flirting tail, that flits uneasily about, is the redstart. Above all, what can be more delightful than to lie on one of these banks in the shade, and look into the deep cerulean depths of a midsummer sky, to watch the fleecy cumulus weave and break in its passage across the dome above, whilst the skylark pours forth its flood of delicious melody? Truly our dear old chalk hills have enough poetry and fact, health and happiness, and ideal enjoyment about them to last many another generation.

And what is to be said of our local shaws! You have never heard of a "shaw"? You do not know what it is? Then I must tell you. See you tangled belt of vegetation leading up from the road to the wood above. Too broad for a hedge, too narrow for a wood, a mystery of verdure, the haunt of charming insects, of beautiful flowers, of interesting things of fur and feather—that is a Kentish shaw.

### THE WOODS.

"The sacred oaks,  
Among whose awful shade the Druids strayed  
To cut the hallowed mistletoe, and hold  
High converse with their gods."

As we have said, the chalk-hills are capped with the Tertiaries. At one time, no doubt, they were covered with them, but the action of air, rain, frost, and running water, has stripped their sides almost bare and deposited rich beds of soil in the valleys, whilst a deeper layer of sand and clay still covers the summits of the hill-ridges of the North Downs. Upon these are situated those Kentish woods, which are the glory of our district and make one of the most charming pictures of English scenery.

The woods are all of mixed growth—yews, oak, beech, hazel, birch, pine and ash intermingle their varied foliage, whilst a thick undergrowth is festooned with wild roses, honeysuckle and clematis. Hawthorn, buckthorn, privet, and hazel form the chief undergrowth, and inlets, carpeted in spring with primroses, violets, blue-bells and anemones run up into the woods on their outskirts. Chattenden, Cobham and Cuxton woods stand unrivalled, and each gives, in its chosen corners, miniatures of scenery which are perfect in their beauty.

Almost reaching into Frindsbury are the well-known Chattenden Roughs, a thickly timbered wood, in which the broad grassy rides are bordered with oak-trees, whilst elm and hazel, ash and birch, dogwood and spindle, whitethorn and blackthorn rise, here into trees of considerable size, there, with interlaced branches forming impenetrable thickets interwoven with dogrose and bramble, through which one attempts to force a way in vain. Have you ever stood in early June, in the broad central drive of Chattenden woods, and gazed on the white sheet fading into the distance where the lovely marguerites clothe the ground and shut out almost every other living thing? Have you ever stood over a bushy plant of the beautiful purple vetch and seen the lovely crimson and green Burnet moths hanging in dozens from every spike of flowers, or by a privet bush in full bloom and watched the hairstreak butterflies at their play? Have you lingered in the still and silent evening, beneath an oaktree, and gazed up into the unfathomable blue, fading now into purple, and watched the twinkling stars when the angel's path—the Milky Way—stands out in startling brilliance, whilst the glowworm's lamp sparkles everywhere among the tall grass and the weird note of the nightjar breaks the stilly air? Then the nightingale breaks into song, the grasshopper warbler trills its shrill and continuous treble, until one is almost wearied by its unchanging monotony. The blackbird sings its evensong, and the still air resounds with joyous melody, for there is a music in the woods by night that the stranger wots not of.

There is no need to tell the natives of Strood that Chattenden woods are

a most celebrated locality for insects. Who, among such, does not know that fritillaries and admirals, browns and orange-tips, skippers and hair-streaks abound there, or, has not heard of the purple emperor that soars around its highest oaks? The long green net is no stranger in our streets, and many well-known scientific men haunt these woods in the sunny summer months. True the mercenary dealer has all but exterminated the lovely purple emperor, and also the beautiful little arches moth (*Nola albulalis*) found nowhere else in Britain, but still, in the fields around, the green forester (*Adscita statites*) abounds, and at nightfall, in July, the blotched emerald (*Phorodesma pustulata*) congregates in flocks, whilst the orange moth (*Angerona prunaria*) makes the dusky rides merry with its headlong flight. The green adela moth, with long antennæ, gambols in little companies about the tips of the oak-boughs in the morning sun, whilst similar playful flights are indulged in by the Tortricid moths, as the sun gradually sinks in the west.

The flowers of these woods are legion. Choose that portion of the wood that has been cut down the previous winter, and walk over it in late May, or early June, when the old stumps are throwing up their new leafage with



A CORNER OF MR. F. WOODHAM'S HOP GARDEN.

From a Photo by A. G. Blackman.

all the vigour of renewed youth. The clearings are perfect wildflower gardens then, and have been since the early spring, when the delicate anemone, or cuckoo-flower, first carpeted the earth with its delicate blossoms—

“Chaste and pure as the driven snow  
Yet faintly tinged with a purple glow”—

whilst huge nosegays of bright golden celadine nestled in the sheltered corners. Then came the rathe primrose, and the breath of the violet scented the air. Soon, the greater stitchwort unfolded its satiny petals, the orchids commenced to display their wonderful blossoms, and the blue bells to stretch away over the open spaces in a filmy haze that seems, as Tennyson says, “the heavens upbreking through the earth.” Then the wild rose and the honeysuckle come, to festoon the borders of the clearing, the wild strawberries give a plenitude of their delicious fruits, and so on throughout the summer, until the teasel, the thistle, and the blackberry have taken sole



possession. Turn a boy into one of these clearings in September, and, after an hour or so, mark the colour of his hands and face.

Such clearings as these are in all our woods. There the harmless ringed snake basks in the hot sun, and now and again the viper may be seen sneaking away to a place of safety. Chattenden, Cobham, Cuxton, all have these charming spots where nature runs riot, made, it would seem, solely for the purpose of man's recuperation.

Birds are in great multitudes. Almost all the summer immigrants that nest in English woods, dwell here. True, the hawfinch loves an orchard where he can watch the peas in the kitchen garden. Daily the rooks caw homewards from field and marsh to their city in Cobham Park, and the herons hie to their "herony," by Dickens' favourite village. The ordinary avian natives, however, are widely distributed, and are to be found almost everywhere—jays, magpies, blackbirds, and thrushes are in great numbers. Cuckoos in the summer abound and cry their name to all the hills around, but the kestrel and the sparrow-hawk, the freebooters of the woods, love best to nest in the tall pines at Cuxton, or in the most retired nooks at Cobham. The feathers of a wood-pigeon here and there show where these butchers have been at work.

Away to Cobham, and here the glories of vegetation are manifold. Mighty oak and lordly chestnut, monster elm and sturdy ash, strive against each other, so that each may excel in strength, height, endurance, or beauty, and the best of each is, in its own way, a giant and alone—for, if the oak is the "monarch," the ash is the "queen," and the birch the "lady" of the woods; and the finest specimens of chestnut and elm are each, in its own way, unsurpassed. On the borders of Chattenden woods the badger still perhaps has his lair, but Cobham woods swarm with the bushy-tailed squirrel; and, although the thorn moths are more abundant here than in the neighbouring woods, the number of species of butterflies and moths is generally supposed to be considerably less.

The charm of Cuxton woods lies in their beeches. Glorious, smooth-trunked, massive giants stand on the slope that overlooks the Medway, the radiant foliage changing with the season—soft golden green in early summer, then a deep vivid green, and lastly a magnificent burst of colour in the autumn. How I love these autumn tints when nature spends herself so prodigally! On these beeches the scarce lobster moth (*Stauropus fagi*) is found, its strange looking larva upsetting all our previously conceived notions of what a caterpillar should be like. The pines of these woods, too, breathe out a fragrance wanting in Chattenden and Cobham. In all the woods, many rare beetles dwell, and these are being fully dealt with in the *Rochester Naturalist* by my good friend Mr. J. J. Walker, one of the most indefatigable and hard-working naturalists in this, or any other, country. Here, too, I may be allowed to pay a tribute to my dear old friend Mr. Chaney, whose list of Lepidoptera published also in the *Rochester Naturalist*, is the standard list of the butterflies and moths that occur in the district. 'Twould be impossible to mention a tithe of the rare beetles that Mr. Walker has "swept" in that well-worn net of his. We only mention these facts, to show that the treasures of these woods, in other branches of natural history, are equally important and numerous as in those portions we have just scanned.

Even now our task is scarcely finished, for in the ponds of the woods and the marshes are millions of minute organisms. The whole element swarms with insect, and lower forms of animal, as well as an abundance of vegetable, life. Examine a drop of pondwater under a microscope, and the apparently clear water is seen to be full of these minute creatures. Have you seen the springer (*Scaridium longicaudum*) with its long forked foot, the lovely *Pterodina patina* with its bright red eyes, or the three-bearded Rotifer (*Triartha mystacina*)? Have you watched the delicate *Milicerta ringens* build its tiny house, laying its little pellets, like bricks, in regular order? Have you examined a desmid under the microscope, or, indeed, ever looked into the still pool itself at midsummer? If not, you will be well repaid for any time you may spend in making observations there.

These short notes are necessarily superficial and imperfect, yet, as our

author asks, "how could a History of Strood be complete, which made no mention of by far the greatest number of its inhabitants, and which breathed not of the beauty with which Nature has, in diverse manner, clothed our hills and vales and the multitude of inhabitants thereof?" Volumes have been written by the members of our local Natural History Society, on the subjects which are here so briefly mentioned. Observers are still wanted to discover and make known to us the structure and habits of the simplest living organisms lying at our very doors. Our ignorance is profound—beyond belief. Possibly these few remarks may be the cause of some one disciple to the ranks of our observers of Nature's secrets. Who knows that another Darwin even may not arise in our midst to restore order to what often appears to the naturalist chaos? Is it not written "Cast thy bread upon the waters and thou shalt find it after many days?"

Here, then, we will bid regretful adieu to—

The dear old marshes that do creep  
By muddy Medway's shore!  
The breezy hills that downward sweep  
E'en to our very door;  
The glorious woods that proudly rise,  
And throw their beauties to the skies,  
Alike for rich and poor.



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